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HOMES PLAN ROCKED BY DOWNTURN

'Doubts' housebuilding targets will be met

By JENNA PUDELEK
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

THE recession has thrown into doubt plans to build tens of thousands of homes in Kent by 2026, according to the county's most powerful politician.

Cllr Paul Carter, leader of Kent County Council, said it was "very doubtful" whether the ambitious target of 654,000 new properties across the region set out in the Government's South East Plan would be realised.

But ministers insisted it was essential the homes were built, despite the struggling housing market and economic downturn. KCC was among organisations across the South East campaigning for lower house-building targets.

Under the plan, Kent and Medway will see nearly 140,000 homes built by 2026.

Cllr Carter said: "Everybody in the South East has worked very hard trying to get some form of numbers agreed.

"But it is all very hypothetical against the backdrop of a global recession and a slump in the UK building industry. So the chances of getting this number built over the next 10 years are pretty slight."

Campaigners have welcomed the final plan after the target for the region was lowered slightly from 33,125 to 32,708 homes a year up to 2026.

Cllr Carter, who owns a building company in London, said if the housing targets were met the region would not have adequate infrastructure to cope.

"If you are going to have this massive growth, how are we going to pay for the infrastructure to support it – the roads, hospitals and schools?" he said. "The Government still has not answered that question. Massive growth without infrastructure becomes horrible very quickly.

"The affordability is in question, as is the ability of the public sector to find the money to fund the infrastructure in partnership with the developers."

In Kent, 6,156 homes will be built per year, which will total 123,120 by 2026.

Medway will see 814 properties built annually, totalling 16,300.

Asked if the number of houses planned for Kent was too high, Cllr Carter said: "I think the chances of a significant proportion of them being built are very, very doubtful."

Communities minister Sadiq Khan, at the announcement of the proposals this week, said: "The number of households in the South East is growing rapidly with supply lagging behind and affordability worsening.

"Despite the current difficulties in the market, we need to keep up with the rise in demand and provide more homes.

"The South East Plan sets out an achievable long-term vision for the area that promotes growth while protecting the countryside and the environment."

The plan sets a target of at least 16 per cent of electricity being derived from renewable sources by 2026.

Dr Hilary Newport, director of the Kent branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), said: "Our

CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO

Gills close in on Wembley glory

Priestfield play-off preview – see inside

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Gay postie sues for being called 'girly'

By **KEVIN O'SULLIVAN**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A GAY postman is suing Royal Mail for £25,000 after a boss called him "effeminate", "bitchy" and "girly".

Liam Black is claiming the sum – equivalent to a year's earnings in his old job – after he was forced to quit, feeling "deeply hurt" by the "derogatory remarks" about his sexuality.

Mr Black, 22, from Chatham, said he was upset at the comments made about him by his line manager Warren Taylor during a meeting held in his absence to discuss a workplace dispute.

The tribunal heard how Mr Taylor made the remarks at a 'bullying and harassment' hearing convened after Mr Black and his postie colleague Danielle Haynes, who were previously best friends, had a dispute.

Mr Taylor – describing Mr Black 's nature to a superior at the April, 2008, meeting – said he was "gay and very effeminate" and that he had a "girly relationship" with Miss Haynes.

Mr Black found out about the remarks after getting a transcript of the meeting a few months later while signed off work through stress following the bust up.

He told the tribunal in Ashford on Wednesday: "As a gay man I found this statement shocking and offensive and was astonished such a comment could be made in an interview in my workplace about me without me having the opportunity to respond."

Picture: IMAGES INTERNATIONAL LTD

UPSET: Liam Black is suing the Royal Mail

Mr Black added: "This was unacceptable and amounted to a homophobic remark which was not challenged."

Mr Taylor admitted using the words "effeminate", "girly" and "bitchy" when referring to Mr Black's relationship with Miss Hayes.

But he told the tribunal he "did not mean" to offend him with the comments and he made a conscious effort to not appear "un-PC".

He said: "During the interview I tried to put the situation into context – I didn't wish to appear un-PC. I mentioned Liam was gay – I wanted to clarify the situation.

"I was aware he was homosexual but this had no bearing on how I treated him. I have used the words girly and bitchy towards a heterosexual man before. I used the word girly because that was the nature of his relationship with Danielle Haynes – they were always at each other's sides giggling."

But Mr Black – who is on Jobseeker's Allowance – said after the hearing that he felt "deeply hurt" by the words, which caused him to be signed off work through stress.

He said he was able to read the comments after requesting notes of the meeting by email.

He said: "To me effeminate and girly were derogatory terms and should not be used in the workplace. I was deeply hurt.

"I should have been judged on my conduct as a Royal Mail employee, not as a gay man."

Barrister Timothy Adkin, for Royal Mail, told the tribunal Mr Taylor should not be judged as homophobic.

But Sarah Frazer Butlin, for Mr Black, said: "It was stereotypical language used to describe a homosexual man. It was saying Mr Black is very effeminate because he was gay."

The former postal worker – who resigned last July – is claiming discrimination over his sexual orientation.

The tribunal panel has reserved its verdict and will rule on the case in 28 days.

Plea to build homes for our future

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

response to the plan was a muted sigh of relief because it could have been much worse.

"We worked so hard to put across the arguments for restraint, despite huge pressure from the development lobby."

Robin Cooper, Medway's director of regeneration, community and culture said: "Medway needs to build between 15,000 and 16,000 homes until 2026 and it has already identified the sites where this will take place.

"They are mainly on our regeneration sites along or close to the River Medway and are part of the Thames Gateway regeneration project. We believe we will reach our targets.

"We think the level of housing is right but only as long as investment from Government in infrastructure to keep pace with the the new housing programme continues and we continue to attract quality jobs for local people.

"We are already well on with our plans to bring about regeneration in Medway and as our design champion Sir Terry Farrell has commented 'Medway is going to be a wonderful place to live – it has great potential'.

"The Financial Times commented that 'Medway is regeneration in action'."

The CPRE was particularly pleased that the wording of the plan has been changed so that the housing targets set are not a 'minimum'.

Dr Newport welcomed a cut in the housing planned for Dover, with a reduction from 14,100 to 10,100 over the next 17 years.

She added: "In Thanet, China Gateway was pushing to get permission for phases two and three of the development.

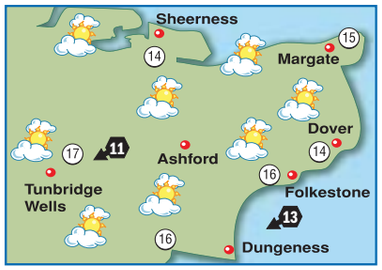
"But in the final version it has not been granted – and it is in black and white.

"While it does not take the threat away completely, there is not the policy support there might have been."

Minister for the South East and Chatham and Aylesford MP Jonathan Shaw said: "We know our population is ageing, with more people living alone, and new households are growing faster than new homes.

"If we don't build more houses in the long-term, older people will have fewer choices and the housing ladder will get even further out of reach, leaving the next generation with nowhere to live."

Kent today



TODAY: An increasingly windy day. It is going to be dry with bright or sunny intervals and variable cloud cover. A dry evening with a few clear spells. Gentle north-easterly winds. Max temp 14-17C (57-63F).
TONIGHT: Mostly cloudy skies with outbreaks of rain possible later. Strong winds. Min temp 7-10C (45-50F).

Around Britain

		°C	°F			°C	°F
Aberdeen	showers	10	50	London	fair	14	57
Belfast	fair	18	64	Liverpool	fair	19	66
Birmingham	fair	14	57	Manchester	cloudy	14	57
B'mouth	cloudy	15	59	Newcastle	cloudy	12	54
Bristol	sun	14	57	Norwich	fair	16	61
Cardiff	fair	16	61	Oxford	cloudy	17	63
Cork	drizzle	13	55	Southsea	sun	18	64
Edinburgh	fair	13	55	S'hampton	fair	14	57
Glasgow	fair	14	57	Southport	fair	19	66
Isle of Man	fair	12	54	Swansea	cloudy	15	59
Leeds	cloudy	12	54	Torquay	fair	15	59

Sun & moon

Sunrise	5.10am	Sunset	8.34pm	Lighting up times:
Moonrise	10.45pm	Moonset	5.11am	8.34pm to 5.09am

High Tides

	today				tomorrow			
	ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)	
Dover	00.20	6.5	12.41	6.4	00.57	6.4	13.18	6.3
Margate	01.26	4.5	13.43	4.4	02.04	4.5	14.14	4.4
St Mary's	06.08	5.3	18.25	5.4	06.42	5.2	19.00	5.3

Week ahead

monday Rain at times. max 14C min 9C
tuesday Windy and wet. max 16C min 10C
wednesday Heavy rain. max 17C min 10C
thursday Showers, heavy. max 16C min 8C
friday A few showers. max 15C min 8C
saturday The odd shower. max 16C in 8C

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Kent on Saturday/Sunday

Gills fans dream of Wembley

CRUNCH DAY: Fans are banking on boss Mark Stimson

A £500,000 pay-day awaits Gillingham FC as they attempt to reach their third Wembley final in a decade this evening.

The Gills have home advantage in the second leg of their play-off semi with Rochdale, with a raucous crowd expected at the Priestfield Stadium to roar their team onto victory.

Last week chief executive Mark Jones revealed how the club stood to pick up £500,000 if they made it to Wembley, with a further half-a-million to come if they win and are promoted to League One.

Gillingham ground out a goalless draw with their semi-final opponents in front of the Sky Sports cameras on Thursday night, ensuring a tense atmosphere at this evening's decider.

Manager Mark Stimson said of his players: "Some of them might be young and may not have a lot of league experience, but some of them that have come with me from non-league have played at Wembley in front of a decent crowd.

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

"They know what it's all about and have tasted it, so they'll be desperate to get back there again.

"If we can take care of the second leg then obviously Wembley is there waiting for us. Rochdale were there last year and tasted defeat, so they will want to go back and enjoy it.

"We just have to try to be positive like we always are and give the best we can. Go out there, attack the game and if that's not good enough at least you can walk out of there with your head held high."

Gillingham's first-ever appearance at Wembley came almost a decade ago when they lost to Manchester City in the 1999-2000 Division Two (now League One) play-off final.

In what many consider the greatest play-off final in history, the Gills threw away a 2-0 lead in the final minutes of the game before finally bowing out on penalties after extra time.

However, they made amends the following year when they beat current Premiership side Wigan Athletic 3-2 after extra time to reach the second tier of English football for the first time.

Gills chairman Paul Scally told Kent on Sunday he thought the play-offs were the best thing to come out of football in the last 20 years.

He said: "They keep people's seasons alive longer and when you've blown it you get a second chance, a wildcard if you like.

"We all know the play-offs are very different to the season, the form teams in the season do not necessarily do well in them. It's a whole new competition but I think mentally and physically Mark (Stimson) has done a tremendous job in getting them prepared to play the sort of football we do."

The Gillingham game kicks off at 6.30pm today. Should they win, they will face either Bury or Shrewsbury Town at Wembley on May 23.

• ***For minute-by-minute coverage of the match from our sports reporters just log on to www.kentnews.co.uk.***

Barge is beached

AN UNMANNED barge has been deliberately beached off the coast at Kingsdown after it began sinking in the Channel.

The Goliath, which was being towed by the tug Sea Alpha, was on its way to Dover when it started to fill with water at 4.40am on Friday.

Crew members alerted the marine emergency services, who beached the 67-metre vessel in a shallow part of The Downs, near Walmer.

Fatal police crash

A WOMAN killed in an accident involving an unmarked police car has been identified as 29-year-old Felicity Austin from Hadlow.

The Independent Police Complaints Commission is investigating Wednesday's crash, which happened on the A21 at Pembury, near Tunbridge Wells.

Miss Austin was driving a black Renault Megane at about 12.30pm when she collided with an unmarked black Met Police Skoda travelling in the opposite direction.

The male driver of the Skoda, which is thought to have had its siren on and blue lights flashing, was cut from the wreckage along with his female colleague.

Miss Austin was due to celebrate her 30th birthday at the end of the month.

To see this clip search 'bell'
@ yourkenttv.co.uk

Zeebrugge bell is rung in memory of Dover Patrol heroes. Search 'bell'

Seaside town about to get Apprentice treatment

WITH antagonistic Lorraine Tighe (pictured above) desperately clinging on to a place on the BBC's hit show The Apprentice, she and the other remaining candidates roll into Margate this week.

The contestants, all hopeful of winning a six-figure salaried job in Sir Alan Sugar's electronics empire, have the task of rebranding the seaside town.

Filming was done in October, and residents who took part are keeping tight-lipped about how it all went.

Film crews scouted The Flower Lab in Market Street, but the owner, who refused to give her name, said: "They came here to see if they could use it as a location, but then they didn't."

A Thanet Council spokesman admitted the local authority is completely in the dark on how Margate emerged from the tough hard-hitting show.

The town was famed for the Dreamland fun park, but that has closed, and the high point is the Turner Contemporary art gallery being built. Sir Bob Geldof, who has a home in Faversham, was once unkind about the town, calling it "ugly".

Now residents are on tenterhooks to see what the two Apprentice teams, Ignite and Empire, do with their town.

The Thanet Council spokesman said: "We don't know how it went. We just don't know anything – that's the problem. We won't know how's it has gone until it is aired next Wednesday."

The council has also banned Derek Harding, the man actually in charge of rebranding the holiday town, from speaking to the Kent on Sunday. He is the programme director of Margate Renewal Partnership.

One of the co-owners of The Gallery in Marine Drive, confirmed they were used in the programme, but said she is unable to say anymore.

Kent contestant, former Tanzanian beauty queen and mum-of-one Mona Lewis, 28, a senior business manager from Sittingbourne, won last week's task.

But Lorraine, 36, a national accounts manager and mum of two from west Kent, is hanging on to a place on the teams by a thread after repeated attacks by Sir Alan.

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Dead keen on zombies

AN AMBITIOUS young film-maker who hopes to raise £100,000 for a new zombie movie has won the backing of Oscar-winning director Ken Russell, ***writes Steve Knight.***

Invasion Of The Not Quite Dead is 30-year-old Antony Lane's first attempt at success on the silver screen, and horror fans are so excited by the independent project that many have pre-ordered the DVD before the film has even entered pre-production.

The Orpington resident, who graduated from the International Film School Wales, told Kent on Sunday he was determined to do things his own way.

He said: "The biggest thing for me was that I didn't want to give up any rights to the franchise. I have a distinct vision for it and I don't want that changed by investors who might have other ideas.

"Ken Russell told me he hates making big-budget films because there are always 20 people who have a say, and none of them wants to listen to him.

"When I was a student we received a talk from the director of Human Traffic, Justin Kerrigan, who told us about how he never made a penny from the film. A lot of people worked on it for free in the hope that it would make some money and then they would be paid.

"The film ended up making millions, but apparently only one person benefited.

"It was almost like a warning to me that there are some nasty people out there who will take you for granted if you let them."

Mr Russell, who directed the 1969 Oscar-winning film Women in Love, has agreed to be consulting executive producer for Invasion Of The Not Quite Dead and will also have a cameo in the film.

Other Hollywood names to have voiced their support for Antony's Indywood fundraising project include Usual Suspects actor Kevin Pollack, Scooby-Doo screenplay writer James Gunn, Night of the Living Dead director Tom Savini and Toxic Avenger creator Lloyd Kaufman.

Antony said: "I think the project has won so much support because people can see I'm trying to do something different and I'm taking more risks than most film-makers would. It's already attracted a strong following among horror fans and they've shown a lot of faith in it, so hopefully I can pay back that faith. I'd really like to see it make enough money for me to make a second film, as I plan for it to be a trilogy.

"I'm not entirely opposed to the idea of directing a big-budget film one day, but for the moment I'm just concentrating on doing my own thing."

Other film-makers to have come on board to help Antony fulfil his zombie vision include Beowulf special effects artist Rich Knight, King Kong make-up artist Corrine Bossu and Emmy award-winning composer Misha Segal.

Antony said: "I want to prove that you don't have to rely on studios or private investors to raise a movie's budget. With ambition and enthusiasm, the sky's the limit.

"We can bring Hollywood to the UK."

Invasion Of The Not Quite Dead, parts of which will be filmed in Kent, is due for release around Halloween next year.

Visit www.theindywoodproject.com for more information.

MEMORY LANE: Antony has the backing of heavyweight director Ken Russell for his zombie movie ambitions

News and sport updated daily online
www.kentnews.co.uk

Jewellery stolen

JEWELLERY worth more than £1,000 has been stolen from a Medway home.

The luxury silver items were taken from a house in Hollywood Lane, Wainscott, on Thursday, April 30. The burglars are believed to have struck between 5-11.30pm.

A police spokesman said: "Anyone with information can call Medway police on 01634 792223, or Crimestoppers on 0800 555111."

Port's 2012 screen

WORK has begun on installing the Olympic Live Site big screen in Dover's Market Square.

The screen could be operating by the end of June, featuring community information and local and national events, in the countdown to the London Olympics in 2012.

The BBC will provide content and manage the screen. Dover was the first Live Site that is not a city chosen by the 2012 organisers.

To watch this clip search 'air'
@ yourkenttv.co.uk

Kent Air Ambulance launches a recycling service at the Julie Rose athletics stadium in Ashford

Comedy great Tracey's Bafta was cast in Kent

A LIFETIME achievement award handed to funnywoman Tracey Ullman was cast by a company in Kent, ***writes Chris Murphy***.

Meltdowns was contacted by the artist commissioned to produce the Charlie Chaplin statue awarded to the British star made good in the United States.

The British Academy of Film and Television Arts (Bafta) held the ceremony in Los Angeles on Friday night.

Director Sarah Craske let Kent on Sunday in on the secrets behind the statue.

At Meltdowns' base in Manston Road, Ramsgate, she said: "The Charlie Chaplin Lifetime Achievement Award for Comedy was designed and created by acclaimed Whitstable graphic designer John Tribe, with the support of the Chaplin Foundation.

"John has been designing and illustrating for more than 30 years working on high-profile advertising campaigns as well as television titles. He also designed the Bafta/LA Britannia Award. It was cast in bronze at our foundry, before being sent to Los Angeles.

"It is great to be part of such a high-profile international project, especially one that celebrates great British talent.

"We were also pleased to get such great feedback from Donald Haber, the executive director of Bafta/LA, who said working with us had been a wonderful experience."

Meltdowns is shortlisted in the category for Best Business in the Creative Industries for the Kent Excellence in Business Awards.

The company is working on other international art projects and offers fine arts foundry facilities and studios.

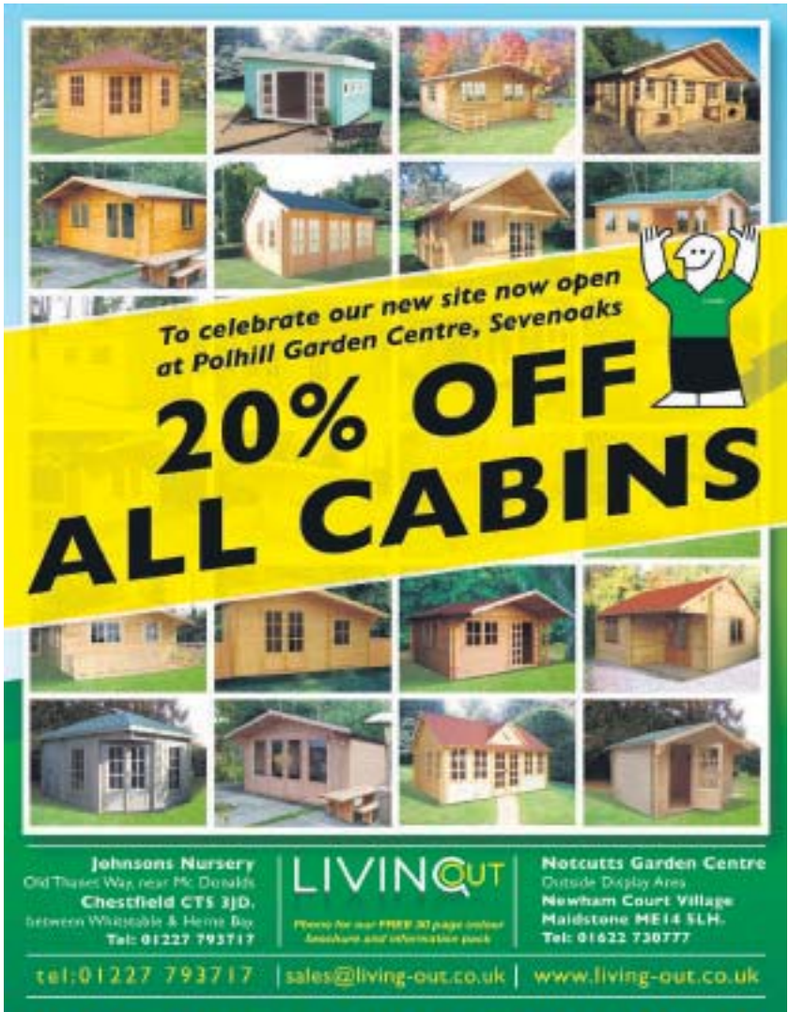
It also runs an award-winning bronze-casting course. Other projects have included creating artworks for Royal Caribbean's cruise liners, historical statues working with English Heritage and the British Museum, and delivering art projects working with schools and Kent Adult Education.

The Chaplin award was presented as part of the 2009 BritWeek celebrations.

Nigel Lythgoe, president of BritWeek and chairman of the Bafta/LA Comedy Festival, said: "We are particularly excited to present our first ever Charlie Chaplin Lifetime Achievement Award to a true representative of British comedy."

Visit www.meltdowns.co.uk for more information about the company.

LAUGHTER LINES: Tracey Ullman's Chaplin award was a Kent production



Missing in action: MoD Gurkha toy

Figures under fire for excluding some soldiers

FIGURE THIS: New Action Man style toys are on sale

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

AN ACTION Man-inspired toy range launched by the Ministry of Defence has come under fire because it doesn't include a Gurkha character.

Men serving in the Army, Navy and Royal Air Force are all included in the nine-strong figure collection unveiled this week, all but one of which is white.

The range – which will net the MoD a percentage of the profits – has been criticised for ignoring the contributions of soldiers like the Gurkhas, who have fought side-by-side with their British comrades for more than 100 years and have a large presence in Kent.

Folkestone town councillor Dhan Gurung served in the British Army for 18 years and saw action in Bosnia, Brunei and Sierra Leone before retiring in 2004.

Sacrifices

He said: "With the Gurkhas not being included in these action figures, it makes it seem like they are not part of the Army. And if that's the case, then why are they always sent to places like Iraq and Afghanistan with everyone else?

"The Gurkhas are 100 per cent part of the British Army and the great people of this country know the sacrifices that we all put in. But the fact we have not been included is not good news."

The Government's relationship with the Gurkhas has soured over the last few months due to a controversial immigration policy that will deny thousands of the former soldiers the right to settle in the UK.

However, the firm behind the figures denied it was discriminating against anybody.

Jerry Healey, marketing director of the Character Group, said: "It certainly is not the case that Gurkhas have been excluded from the current range of Armed Forces action figures but simply a fact that we were limited to nine military characters in this initial toy range and it was simply not possible to represent every brigade.

"There are plans to expand the range and the possibility of introducing other brigades and roles such as Arctic and desert will be considered with each launch. Therefore, the production of a Gurkha character is not out of the question."

An MoD spokesman added: "The Gurkhas play a vital role in our Armed Forces and we greatly value their courage and commitment."

The action figure range, which also includes replica tanks, boats, an RAF strike jet, mortars, portable missiles and a parachute, will be priced from £14.98 upwards.

Officials say the revenue will be added to the military's publicity budget, a decision that has been ridiculed by Gurkha Justice Campaign organiser Peter Carroll.

The Shepway councillor said: "I think it's pathetic. They should be spending the money on making sure our soldiers have the correct kit they need.

"Why do they even need publicity? Everyone already knows what the MoD does. There are more important things to concentrate on than playing with toys."

Star Lumley takes Westminster by storm

SUPPORT: Actress Joanna Lumley

GURKHAS' rights campaigner Joanna Lumley has taken her fight for a fairer immigration policy to the very top of the UK Government.

The former model and actress began the week giving evidence to a Commons committee on the subject and ended it by surprising immigration minister Phil Woolas with an unscheduled meeting at the BBC's Westminster office.

In between she even found time to voice her concerns about the new policy to Prime Minister Gordon Brown, after which time she told reporters she was confident he would "do the right thing".

Lumley is the public face of the Gurkha Justice Campaign, working alongside Shepway councillor Peter Carroll in their battle for all retired Gurkhas to be allowed to live in the UK.

Her impromptu meeting with Mr Woolas, who was defeated in the PR battle by the actress, followed the rejection of appeals by five Gurkhas for residency, one of whom was badly injured during the Falklands War.

Lumley said afterwards: "I have met Mr Woolas and now I am reassured again because I know we are going to assist him in making the strongest guidelines possible.

"We have to believe in this. This is all we've got to believe in. We wish this campaign was over now.

"There is nothing more to think about and consider."

Earlier in the week Lumley said she had received support for her campaign from a member of the Royal family, believed to be the Duchess of Cornwall.

However, Mr Woolas has said that immigration policy cannot be "determined on a whim" and that residency rules for Gurkhas must be considered within a legal framework.

Meanwhile, a Gurkha rifleman was one of two British Army soldiers killed in southern Afghanistan on Thursday after a suicide attack against their vehicle.

The Ministry of Defence confirmed a member of 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles and one from 173 Provost Company, 3rd Regiment, Royal Military Police, died during a patrol in Gereshk, Helmand province.

The Gurkha's death follows those of Rifleman Yubraj Rai and Colour Sergeant Krishna Dura, both of 2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles, who died from enemy combat fire within a fortnight of each other last November.

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Drugs haul 'saved lives'

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

DRUG smugglers who used high-speed dinghies to transport large quantities of cocaine across the Channel have been jailed for a total of 54 years.

The gang of five – including two from Bexleyheath and two from Larkfield, near Maidstone – were arrested after a member of the public spotted a "military-like operation" on a beach at Hythe, in March last year.

It involved the transfer of several black holdalls from a boat to a waiting vehicle, which was then driven away at high speed.

All five men were sentenced at Maidstone Crown Court on Thursday.

Det Sgt John McDermott said after the case: "This is a very satisfying conclusion to what has been an intensive, meticulous and lengthy investigation across Kent, London and northern France.

"Significantly, the five men sentenced today were part of an organised crime group that was probably one of the most prolific gangs involved in this type of criminality.

"In dismantling this group and bringing these men to justice, we have probably saved lives. Drug-trafficking fuels all sorts of criminality and has a devastating effect on the lives of already vulnerable people.

"This sentence sends a clear message to anyone involved in this type of crime. We are determined to prosecute offenders and strip them of their assets."

Police identified 47-year-old Nicolas Chappell from Larkfield as the ringleader of the gang, and he was sentenced to 18 years in prison after pleading guilty to conspiring to supply controlled drugs and money-laundering.

LEADER: Nicolas Chappell received 18-year sentence

Brothers Neil, 33, and Jamie Hackett, 25, both from Bexleyheath, will spend 11 and nine years behind bars respectively. They too had pleaded guilty to the charges.

David Manser, 26, from Larkfield, and Giedrius Kavaliauskas, 28, from West Sussex, were both found guilty after trial and both received eight-year sentences.

A sixth man – Paul Proud, 47, from London – was acquitted.

The investigation into the gang began in September, 2007, when a member of the public spotted them taking packages from a boat on the beach at Hythe.

STASH: The van in which police uncovered the drugs and (left) pure cocaine found at the premises of gang member Neil Hackett

Officers later caught the men, who claimed to have been fishing despite having no equipment or adequate clothing, loading the vessel into a van.

After the second operation the following March, police searched Chappell's home and found high-grade cocaine with a street value of more than £70,000 as well as a large amount of cash, the inflatable boat and various items of sea equipment.

More was found at the home and business premises of Neil Hackett.

Judge David Griffiths-Jones, sentencing, said: "This was a well-planned and drilled operation using high-powered inflatable boats to travel to France in what was an organised commercial enterprise involving substantial quantities of cocaine.

"Those involved in this enterprise sought to make huge profits from human misery."

News and sport updated daily online
www.kentnews.co.uk

Meat theft arrest

A DOVER man has been arrested for alleged theft of meat from Netto.

Karl Webb, 31, of Maison Dieu Road, was arrested by officers following the theft of £74.93 of meat from the store on Monday, April 27.

He was charged with alleged theft and bailed to answer before Folkestone Magistrates on Wednesday, May 13.

Hero to visit No.10

AN ARMY veteran from Sheppey will attend an Armed Forces' Day reception at 10 Downing Street.

Brian Lyons from Minster, will go to the event on Thursday, June 25, after local MP Derek Wyatt put his name forward.

Mr Lyons, a former Grenadier Guard who lost a leg in military service, is delighted to be going.

He said: "I am over the moon. I am really looking forward to it. It's wonderful for Derek to think of me and give me this opportunity."

Mr Lyons is the secretary and welfare officer of the Sheppey branch of the Soldiers' Sailors' and Air Men and Families Association.

Mr Wyatt said: "The island should be mighty proud of Brian Lyons and if there were more people who gave as selflessly as he has, we'd be a better society."

'Pug' pups stolen

WITNESSES are being sought by police after three pug-Pekinese cross puppies worth a total of £3,000 were taken from a house in Lydd.

The pups were stolen from an address in Robin Hood Lane in the early hours of Thursday morning, April 30, between 3-3.38am.

Police would like to speak to anyone who has information about the theft, or may have seen anything suspicious.

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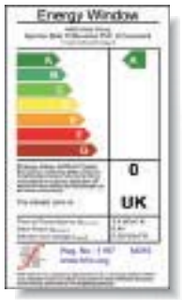

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Excellent rating for health centre

A TREATMENT centre at Maidstone Hospital has received a rating of excellent following an unannounced inspection by the Care Quality Commission.

Inspectors reported that the Mid Kent Treatment Centre, which provides a range of general surgical day procedures for NHS patients, was clean, well-maintained, comfortable and pleasant.

Manager Pamela Mackie said: "We are delighted to have been given such a positive inspection. It is a great boost to the whole team here and also provides additional assurance to our patients."

Shoppers heat up

BLUEWATER celebrated a rise in footfall over the May bank holiday weekend.

Almost eight per cent more people visited the shopping centre compared to the same period last year, with 17.5 per cent more on Bank Holiday Monday alone.

Feedback from retailers is that the predicted hot summer led to increased sales in summer fashion, swimwear, sunglasses, garden furniture and barbecue equipment.

Nuclear plant sale

LAND suitable for nuclear station at Dungeness has been advertised to potential developers.

EDF Energy is looking to sell off either Dungeness or Heysham in Lancashire for another operator to build a nuclear power station there. Both sites were acquired as a result of the firm's integration with British Energy in January.

The sale, which has been advertised in the Financial Times, is in line with the policy of the Government to have more than one developer of new nuclear power plants in the UK.

Hard of hearing employees are an untapped resource

Charity turns up the volume on deafness

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

BUSINESSES may be missing out on the best employees because they do not know how to cater for deaf job applicants.

That was the message from minister for the disabled Jonathan Shaw as he visited charities throughout the county as part of Deaf Awareness Week.

Mr Shaw, who is also MP for Chatham and Aylesford, announced the Government was pumping an extra £138 million into its Access to Work scheme that provides funding to businesses for specialist equipment and training.

He told Kent on Sunday there was no reason why deaf people should be discriminated against in the workplace.

Mr Shaw said: "We need to raise awareness of the challenges deaf people face. We are working with employers to help them understand there is a pool of untapped talent. The more we can do to raise awareness of the issues affecting deaf people and how we can assist others to communicate with deaf people, the more likely it is we can improve their employment opportunities.

SUPPORT: MP Jonathan Shaw meets volunteer Florence Dangerfield and British Sign Language interpreter Karen Green

"We have doubled the amount of money available to businesses and disabled people as part of our Access to Work scheme in the last year or so, it's a really important issue.

"There are some really fantastic potential employees out there who do not have jobs because they are deaf, and we want to help change that. We've seen about a 10 per cent increase in disabled people in work over the last seven or eight years."

Among the charities Mr Shaw visited as part of Deaf Awareness Week was HiKent, which provides advice, information and useful equipment to assist people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Chief executive John Clayton said it was important such people did not feel isolated from others: "One person in every seven has a significant hearing loss, in Kent that equates to a quarter of a million people. There's no real reason why people should not lip-read or learn sign language.

"I welcome every opportunity to help deaf people into employment because I'm sure there are many who might feel intimidated about even going for an interview. The enlightened employer would ask if their candidate has any special needs, but I'm sure there are others who overlook that."

HiKent was founded 23 years ago and now has special resource centres in Maidstone, Canterbury and Gillingham where people with hearing difficulties can test out gadgets such as ultra-loud alarm clocks and smoke alarms that cause a pad beneath their owner's pillow to vibrate if there is a fire while they are asleep.

The charity also has more than 200 volunteer-run clinics in Kent that people can go to with any issues about hearing loss.

During Mr Shaw's visit he met and congratulated Florence Dangerfield, who at 104 is the charity's longest-serving volunteer.

Book to help fight hate crime

A MANUAL has been published to help people with communication difficulties to report hate crime and bullying.

Taking A Stand is the latest book compiled by Medway-based Signalong Group, which adapts British Sign Language (BSL) for children and adults with learning difficulties and autism.

Chief executive Mike Kennard said: "It's a huge problem for our client group because they tend to be picked on. There's a lot of name-calling that goes on, as well as more serious crimes like robbery."

Mr Kennard said BSL was difficult for autistic people or those with learning difficulties to use because many words use the same signs, and the system places words in a different order to ordinary English.

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Six promises from the 'only opposition'

LIBERAL Democrats in Kent have launched their Six to Fix campaign ahead of next month's county council elections.

The group's manifesto, which was published on Thursday, lists what its councillors' top priorities will be if they manage to wrench control from the ruling Conservative administration.

Included in the Six to Fix are promises to stop the waste of money the Lib Dems accuse the Tories of, and to repair the county's roads and pavements.

The group says it will also help make Kent greener, improve local services, reduce crime and introduce better road safety schemes.

And in a thinly-disguised swipe at the council's Labour group, the Lib Dems say they offer the "only constructive opposition" to hold the Tories to account.

In terms of money-waste, the group has criticised the Tories for spending millions on publicity and the controversial Kent TV.

They also feel chief executive Peter Gilroy earns too much at more than £250,000 per year and has again blasted KCC for losing £50 million in Icelandic banks.

The manifesto also argues the Lib Dems have pursued a green agenda for many years and will continue to do so, promising to continue to campaign on issues such as renewable energy and recycling.

In terms of local services, the group says it will work to prevent a Baby P-type tragedy happening in the county.

The manifesto reads: "The death of young children as a result of neglect or cruelty is rightly regarded as a scandal.

"We will carry out reviews of all serious cases and a review of the provision for looked-after children as recommended by Government."

There are currently six Lib Dem councillors on KCC, compared to 56 Conservative, 20 Labour and one independent.

Labour's manifesto, Better for Kent, was published on March 23 while the Tories', entitled Strong Leadership for Difficult Times, came out late last month.

The KCC elections will take place on Tuesday, June 9.

Visit www.kentlibdems.org.uk for more information on the group's manifesto.

Entrepreneurial spirit pays off

Legal team's £1.4m profit to help benefit public services

By JENNA PUDELEK
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

BLURRING the lines between a public and private sector legal service has enabled an innovative team of lawyers to make more than £1 million for taxpayers last year.

Kent County Council's unusual legal services department is the brainchild of Geoff Wild, director of law and governance, who saw the potential of embracing a money-making model with a public sector ethos.

More than 200 public sector organisations employ the services of the 75-strong team of lawyers, including other local authorities, schools, police forces and fire departments across the country from Durham to Cornwall.

Staid

"Effectively what we are operating at Kent County Council is an in-house legal service that is run along the same lines as a private practice," Mr Wild said.

"We have departed from the traditional local government's staid, tired and bureaucratic model while not abandoning the public sector ethos that motivates us.

"We have adopted a private sector mentality of entrepreneurial spirit, run along business lines, which looks for innovation and income generation as our modus operandi."

Last year the service generated £1.4m profit that was ploughed back into frontline services such as schools, child protection, libraries and roads, he said.

Mr Wild, who started his law career working for Red Ken Livingstone at the Greater London Council during his battles with Margaret Thatcher, said the service had increased its net return to KCC by 500 per cent in the five years since its conception.

The success of the department has led to it being labelled the 'Kent Model' and local authorities across the country are now eager to adopt it.

But so far only Essex County Council has a similar team. Mr Wild said: "It is very unusual.

"In a traditional local government model the council will fund its own legal team and only to do its own work and nothing more.

"The difference with Kent is that we get no funding from the council directly and we set ourselves almost at arms length.

"I now spend an awful lot of time travelling the country meeting councils that are keen to embrace what we are doing.

"It's a high risk strategy – if you are not set up properly and fail to deliver the goods there is no safety net. The authority would bail out.

"You flourish or fail by the quality of the work you produce. If you are prepared to take the risks the benefits are huge.

"It allows me as a manager and businessman to grow and reinvest without the usual red tape in a bureaucratic environment."

The team provides legal services to public sector bodies at a lower cost than if they sought private sector advice.

"We are not able to match the salaries paid in the private sector," Mr Wild said. "It is lawyers wanting to work in the public sector.

"It is the ethos that drives them. They really want to feel part of something, like community spirit.

"Because we are prepared to work at salaries lower than in the private sector it keeps the overheads and costs down and we can offer prices that are competitive."

The team specialises in company contracts, property, planning, employment law and litigation, offering a range of services provided by a large practice.

Mr Wild now has his sights set on Europe and expanding using KCC's Brussels office to advise public authorities in new EU member states on the complexities of European law such as procurement and contracting.

The team could win three prestigious awards this year. A Local Government Chronicle award is already in the bag, and the team has been short-listed for Municipal Journal's legal achievement and The Lawyer awards in June.

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Incandescent with rage over EU light-bulb laws

RATIONING has been introduced at a lighting shop to cope with the demand from customers for old-fashioned light-bulbs that will soon be outlawed by EU bureaucrats.

Jonathan Wright has run Classic Lighting in Tunbridge Wells for 40 years, and he said people don't want to use the new greener bulbs, because they are too dim.

He said: "I don't want to say they are disgusted of Tunbridge Wells, but that is what my customers are saying.

"The Government is phasing out all of these lightbulbs, while there is no proper replacement.

"I am not against green bulbs and saving the planet. But how can you ban something so fundamental to our lives without there being anything to put in its place?

"I would love to take this issue straight to Gordon Brown and show him why this is wrong. Low-energy bulbs will be improved in the future, along with more advances in LED technology, but that won't be for years.

BRIGHT IDEA? EU laws will soon phase out traditional 100 watt light-bulbs

Poor substitute

"Yet we have perfectly serviceable bulbs that are being outlawed and a poor substitute in their place. It just doesn't make any sense."

Such is the demand, he has been forced to limit customers to only 10 of the current incandescent bulbs per person.

The new ones are known as compact fluorescent light, or CFL but they are not up to the job and there are reports that some users get migraines from them.

Mr Wright said: "They take time to warm up and emit the correct brightness and they are too big for some small lamps.

"It is only a small thing, but you would be surprised just how angry some of my customers are."

He has sold around 3,000 of the soon-to-be-illegal 100 watt bulbs in the past eight weeks, a 300 per cent rise.

Even a 50 per cent rise in prices is not stopping people stocking up.

Camilla Robinson, who runs a bed and breakfast in the town, said: "They are okay for the hallway when you have to leave a light on overnight, but not for some of my small antique light fittings. They look like they have a big milk bottle sticking out of them. They look ridiculous."

The new rules mean the traditional light bulb will soon be extinguished for good.

Defra said: "In September it will become illegal for manufacturers in the EU to sell frosted incandescent bulbs and those over 100W to retailers.

"Remaining incandescent lamps will be phased out over the next three years."

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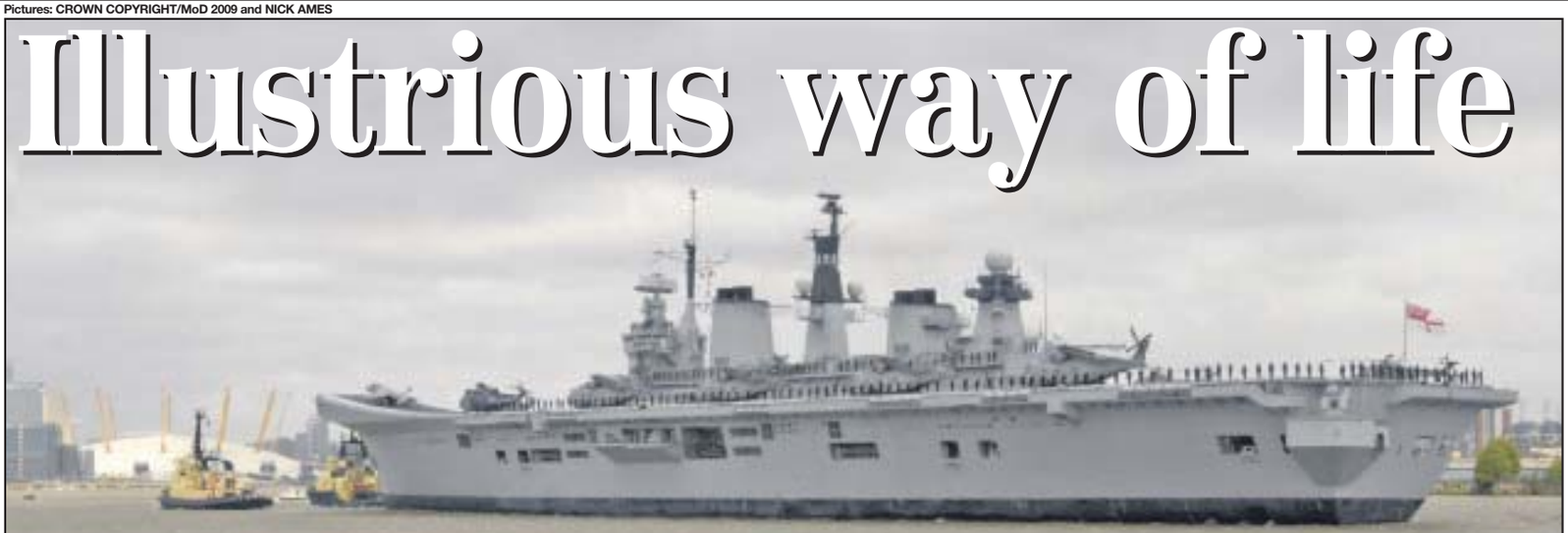
Illustrious way of life



When HMS Illustrious sailed around the south coast to mark the centenary of naval aviation, Kent on Sunday reporter NICK AMES was on board to meet the aircraft carrier crew who patrol the high seas

THE flagship of the Royal Navy, HMS Illustrious, steamed majestically around the coast of Kent on its way to a Royal reception.

Setting out from Portsmouth, the 22,000 tonne aircraft carrier headed out into the English Channel and rounded land at Dungeness before sailing past Dover, around Thanet, past the Isle of Sheppey and under the bridge at Dartford before mooring off Greenwich.

The cruise formed part of the celebrations marking 100 years of naval aviation – the service bought its first airship in 1909.

Guest of honour on board for a special dinner was Prince Andrew, Duke of York, who was joined by Secretary of State for Defence John Hutton.

During the voyage the Navy's head of aviation, Rear Admiral Simon Charlier, flew on board at the controls of a Merlin helicopter.

"I love flying," he said. "And when you are an admiral it's easy to get the controls."

The officer, who went to Dover College where he captained the sailing team, said: "This centenary is a big celebration to be involved in.

"After two world wars and other conflicts we are looking to the future now and I know our proud traditions will be maintained."

HMS Illustrious is the nation's strike carrier, with Harrier jets and helicopters flying from its deck.

The ship is responsible for home defence and protecting air power abroad, having recently been deployed off both Iraq and Afghanistan.

She is also a major factor in the UK's response to international disasters, assisting humanitarian operations in Mozambique and evacuating civilians from danger zones.

The ship – known affectionately as 'Lusty' by her crew – first came into service in 1982 and is due to be retired in the next decade and replaced by two 'super carriers', the 63,000 tonne Queen Elizabeth II and Prince of Wales.

"A lot of people don't really know what ships do," said Sub-Lieutenant Matthew Winwood from Gillingham, who is training to be a mine clearance diver.

"After all, they are usually out at sea. This is a chance for people to get a good look at us as we sail past the coast."

GUEST OF HONOUR: HRH Prince Andrew

Captain of Illustrious is Ben Key, whose grandfather fought at the Battle of Jutland in World War One.

Capt Key, whose grandmother is from Canterbury, explained his role.

"Really I think I have the best job in the Royal Navy," he said.

"My task is to take whatever I am asked to do by the Commander in Chief and achieve it.

"I have to ensure all the potential, talent and energy among my crew is pointing in the same direction to achieve the goal we aim for.

"Life at sea is all consuming, day merges into night and back into day again.

"But I do have time to relax. Sometimes I will go and just talk to members of the crew.

"One sailor will crack a joke and that will

ALL HANDS ON DECK: The crew of the Illustrious line up as the ship sails into London

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FLIGHT CONTROLLER: Rear Admiral Simon Charlier said the Navy is looking forward to building on its proud defence traditions

TAKE OFF: A Harrier Jumpjet landed on the deck of HMS Illustrious during the trip

EXERCISE: Firefighters held a training drill

TRAINEE OFFICERS: Dominic Savage (left) is following his father and grandfather's to sea and Dan Howes wants to fly Harriers

remind me, despite my responsibilities, why I joined in the first place.

"Is being captain a lonely job? No.

"I'm not a member of the officers' mess but I can invite anyone I want to dinner and they'll come having polished their shoes first.

"If there is an important decision to be made then of course I will make it.

"But there are people I can talk to – I'm surrounded by so much talent and that is something I use as much as I can."

Illustrious started its voyage on Tuesday from Portsmouth where she was moored next to the Navy's newest warship, the Type 45 destroyer HMS Daring, which is the most advanced combat vessel in the world.

She then headed south past the Isle of Wight where a Harrier jet piloted by Lt Paul Francis touched down on deck.

Sea King, Merlin and Lynx helicopters followed and were all on parade as the ship sailed through the Thames Barrier – with just a few feet of clearance each side – and arrived in London on Wednesday.

During the trip the crew staged a firefighting exercise, simulating a blaze in a hanger, and also practised defending the vessel against an incoming aircraft.

For trainee officer Dan Howes, from Lydden, it was quite an experience.

"It is really my first time at sea," he said. "But I know what I want to do – fly Harriers. It must be an incredible buzz."

His friend and fellow trainee Dominic Savage, from Whitstable, added: "My father was in the Navy as was my grandfather who fought in World War Two.

"I wanted to follow in their footsteps and I'm glad I did."

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TIGHT SQUEEZE: HMS Illustrious is expertly steered through the Thames barrier, with only a few feet to spare on each side

SEA VIEW: Members of the crew take in the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich, and Docklands and the O2 Arena (below)

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New Thames crossing may also be another flood barrier

By **CHRIS MURPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A CALL from the Environment Agency to combine another Dartford crossing with a new Thames barrier has been dubbed a "red herring".

The Agency said a new barrier will be needed by 2070, and planning for it needs to start now, but the leader of Dartford council believes it will fail to get off the ground.

In a fresh strategy document called Thames Estuary 2100, or TE2100, it says a favoured location will be at Long Reach, close to the existing Dartford Crossing.

An alternative site at Tilbury in Essex is also under consideration.

The Highways Agency is already looking at both sites for a new crossing between Kent and Essex to handle a rapid rise in traffic.

The Environment Agency's head of flood risk strategy David Rooke, said: "The plan for a new [Dartford] crossing does open up all sorts of possibilities."

Architect Sir Terry Farrell has proposed building a five-mile barrage from Southend to Sheerness – basically the mouth of the Thames – all linked by islands.

This would then protect the entire Thames Gateway project from surge floods that can happen every 200 years or so, he said.

That idea is currently being considered by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

ALTERNATIVE: There are plans for a new flood defence to help the Thames barrier

But Mr Rooke believes this may be unnecessary. He said: "The Gateway area is afforded one of the highest levels of protection in the UK. We want to maintain that going forward."

The Farrell proposal comes complete with a cable-stayed road and rail bridge to create a transport link between the two counties, and the three islands could be used for housing and leisure facilities, the sale of which will help pay for it all.

KCC said it is currently facing difficulties over the consultation because local elections are coming up next month.

Because of this, the consultation period for TE2100 is set to be moved back to the end of July to allow more time for new councillors to get to grips with the proposals.

KCC director of integrated transport strategy, Geoff Mee, said: "The county council has been aware of this idea for some time and we think it's worth investigating. We will be talking further with all the interested parties."

But Dartford council leader, Jeremy Kite, said: "I think combining a barrier with a road and rail crossing is a red herring.

"We are aware the barrier needs replacing at some point but I think the cost and technical difficulties of combining both means it is unfeasible. What we need is a single straightforward solution that takes the cars away from the Dartford area."

He added: "Sir Terry's solution is again something where they are over-engineering the solution. The only answer is to build a bridge – it is technically feasible and economically realistic.

Safeguard

"These other solutions belong in a time where money is no object."

Costs for the project will be large. In the next 25 years, the focus is on maintaining and improving existing defences and safeguarding land for flood management in the future, which will together cost £1.4 billion.

Then a further £3.1bn will be spent on raising flood walls and reshaping the riverside between 2035 and 2069.

And from 2070 onwards an estimated £4.2bn is expected to be spent on either maintaining and improving existing flood defences or building a new barrier at Long Reach.

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No rest for life-saving RNLI crews

STILL LIFE: The RNLI station at Margate is within the Turner Contemporary building site

AN INSHORE lifeboat was launched after a man threatened to jump into the sea from the harbour wall in Dover, ***writes Chris Murphy***.

It was part of a busy Bank Holiday weekend for the RNLI. Eventually, the man was talked down by police officers and the lifeboat returned to base.

The lifeboat was again at sea when a man in a kayak capsized off Westgate Bay. By the time they arrived the crew found the man had managed to swim to steps near the sea wall. He was showing signs of exhaustion so the lifeboat ferried him to the beach at the Nayland Rock.

On Monday afternoon, a plane reported a motor-cruiser en route to Ramsgate was stuck on the Hook Sands off Birchington.

The inshore lifeboat laid out an anchor and helped the two occupants refloat their craft on the rising tide.

They continued their passage to Ramsgate, escorted by an all-weather lifeboat.

Margate lifeboat coxswain Trevor Lamb said: "Powered craft can quite easily damage their propellers and rudders when they run aground, which may not become apparent until they refloat.

"We urge boat owners always to notify the Coastguard if they run aground so that assistance can be provided at an early stage."

Meanwhile, at Margate lifeboat station it is business as usual despite extensive works to its base to make space for the Turner Contemporary gallery.

Disruption

The £17.4 million project is next to the lifeboat station and the boathouse and access routes now resemble a building site.

Developers say the work of the lifeboat will not be compromised during the two years of building work.

A temporary roadway has been laid for the lifeboat within the site and the crew have been provided with access through electronic security gates. Operations manager Mike Baker said: "We are facing disruption but we are determined to be good neighbours.

"The contractors have made special efforts to cater for our requirements.

"Their co-operation is essential in ensuring we are able to continue with our duties, particularly with the summer season fast approaching. On the plus side, being within the site compound we have a degree of extra security."

News and sport updated daily online
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Es are not quite so good for critics of Hollywood sign proposal

HEAD FOR THE HILLS: Medway could emulate Tinseltown's sign

MEDWAY could get a huge Hollywood-style sign spelling out its name after tests on a giant letter E which cost thousands of pounds.

The full sign would cost about £12,000. Council officers dreamed up the unusual idea, and then spent taxpayers' cash to put up the vast white letter before driving past on the M2 to see how it looked.

Council officials said no-one at the civic centre took a photograph of the E, which was taken down after four days.

The authority said it wanted to "put Medway on the map" and looked to the famous Tinsletown lettering when the Highways Authority refused permission to put the word 'Medway' on motorway signs.

A spokeswoman said: "This has not been put before any councillors or committees at this stage. One letter went up to see what it looked like. A group of officers came up with the idea."

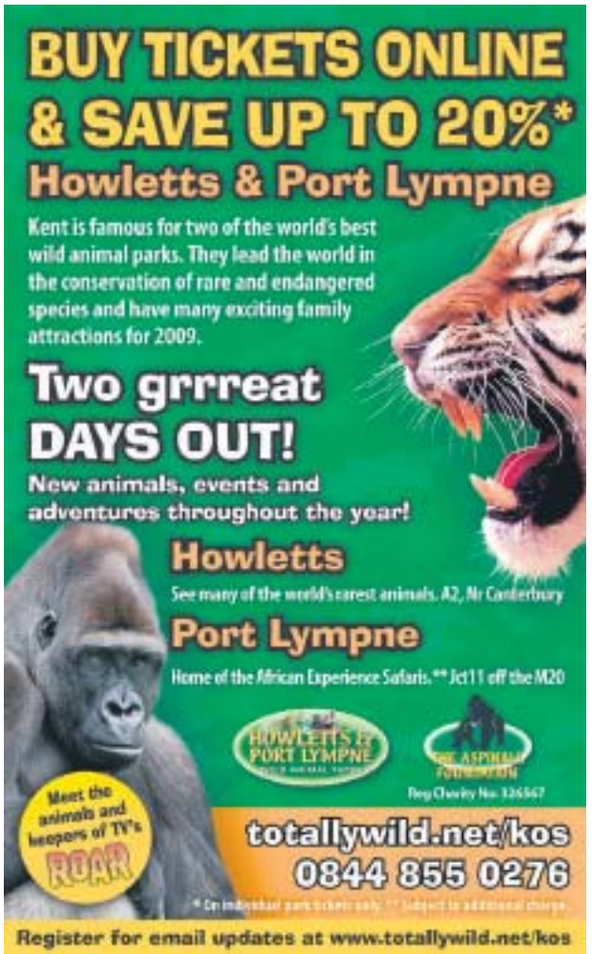
They said not many people outside the county are aware of Medway, which covers the towns of Strood, Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham and Rainham, plus a scattering of villages.

The official added: "One idea suggested was to erect a Medway sign on the hillside overlooking the motorway.

"Before deciding whether or not to pursue the idea, a test using scaffolding and board was carried out."

But Labour's Cllr Dorte Gillry, who is on the planning committee which would have to clear any sign before it went up, said: "I don't approve of this. It's a little bit naff.

"The last thing I want to see is a large sign above banks of the River Medway coming over the M2. A sign of that size isn't appropriate. No-one told me anything about and I didn't see the E."



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FOLKESTONE - CALAIS

THE MOTORISTS' NO.1 CHOICE FOR CROSSING THE CHANNEL

Picture: PENNY GREEVES

All abuzz over secret weapon

SCIENTISTS at a horticultural centre are hoping to join global researchers to discover why the world population of honeybees is taking a nosedive and what can be done to help it recover.

Some £10 million has already been made available by the Government to help centres like East Malling Research, known as EMR, to boost the declining population.

And one Kent grower is already trying bumblebees as a secret weapon.

If bees die out, it will have a major ecological impact, say scientists at EMR – they are vital to continue the circle of flower and fruit life.

The Garden of England is world famous for its fruit orchards and they could be at risk if bee numbers fall even further.

They now want to work with other UK researchers to bid for part of the funding to address current and future pollination problems threatening apple, pear, cherry and plum orchards.

By **CHRIS MURPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

The number of honeybees in the UK has fallen by 15 per cent in the past two years.

In addition, numbers of other pollinators, such as wild bees, hoverflies and butterflies, also appear to be in decline.

Dr Michelle Fountain, an entomologist at EMR, is keen to see research progressed as quickly as possible to avert a lack of successful pollination of fruit and other key crops.

That would threaten UK food security and lead to higher production costs and price increases on the supermarket shelves.

She said: "It is clear our hives are being significantly weakened with up to half of the UK managed honeybee colonies dying over the winter – probably as result of a combination of complex factors, including a variety of pest and diseases, loss of important natural floral resources, and the inappropriate use of pesticides.

"While honeybees are very important for crop pollination we also need a greater understanding of other potential managed and wild bee pollinators."

She added: "Native bees thrive while pollinating our fruit trees but they need other sources of pollen nearby to sustain them through the summer months when the apple, cherry and pear blossom has long gone."

And James Simpson, the innovative managing director of Adrian Scripps Ltd, agrees it is a serious problem, and is now trying bumblebees as a secret weapon.

With orchards over five farms in the county covering 350 hectares producing more than 13,500 tonnes of fruit, he said: "We are still fortunate that Kent and Sussex apiarists, from whom we traditionally hire our hives, have a good bee population, but as added insurance we are conducting trials this year by using bumblebees, which we think can do the job equally well.

"An additional advantage is that they still work hard over the month or so when maximum pollination is vital and remain busy at lower temperatures than honeybees, with each hive of about 300 bumble bees pollinating 260,000 flowers a day.

Bedrock

"However, the hives cannot be moved around as the orchards come into flower."

This spring, 15 trial hives have been supplied to Scripps by Dutch specialist Koppert.

Mr Simpson said: "What we do know is that good pollination is one of the bedrocks of growing good-quality fruit for the customer, which extends far beyond simply picking and grading."

Find more news and sport updated daily
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Graffiti clean-up is 'too expensive'

CANTERBURY is suffering so much graffiti the council cannot afford to clean it all off.

At a town hall meeting it was revealed Kent County Council provides £6,500 a year for the removal of graffiti from public buildings, a sum councillors say is not enough to cover the spiralling costs.

Cllr Nick Eden Green said: "Some of the graffiti has been there for four months. Where is the £6,500 from Kent County Council being spent?

"This is well over £100 per week and the results are just not there."

But portfolio holder Jenny Samper said the figure was not enough, and Canterbury was in talks to have the sum increased.

The council is also promoting graffiti cleaning kits, which can be bought by householders for £30, which they can use to remove scrawls from their own property.

Woman attacked

A TERRIFIED woman was left with severe bruising to her face after being attacked in a Strood park.

The 33-year-old was assaulted in Bligh Way Park on April 26 after being confronted by three women between 3.15pm and 3.30pm. Two were said to have attacked her, causing bruising to her face.

Witnesses are asked to contact Medway Police station on 01634 792521 or CrimeStoppers on 0800 555 111.

Fastest broadband in the world on trial

By **CHRIS MURPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

HOMES in Ashford have been chosen to test the fastest public internet speeds in Britain.

Virgin Media has just introduced a 50Mb speed from £35 a month, but is now testing connections of up to 200Mb – four times faster. The company used Ashford to test the 50Mb speed last year, and now between 50 and 100 homes are testing some of the fastest internet connections in the world.

The company uses fibre-optic cables rather than the copper wires used in telephone web connections.

Wideband

Neil Berkett, chief executive officer at Virgin Media, said: "We're really excited to be embarking on this journey of discovery.

"We're at the forefront of innovation and understanding when it comes to ultrafast broadband services and the 200Mb pilot will give us further insight into how true 'wideband' services might be used by consumers."

The current fastest speed in Japan is 160Mb. In the USA it's 101Mb, run by a company called Cablevision for almost £50 a month. There are also 100Mb services in Europe. Virgin said it had been testing its higher speeds in the lab and their introduction represents one more step towards access becoming available to all customers.

The 50Mb speeds took about a year to become widely available after public testing. Virgin Media said the latest pilot scheme would last from six months to a year. A spokesman confirmed: "It's a pilot at this stage and we cannot commit to a date for a full commercial launch."

The company is charging customers another £50 to install 50Mb modems and routers, but a salesman said: "This may drop as more people take up the service."

So it would be fair to assume Virgin will also charge more to install new equipment for its 200Mb service when and if it becomes commercially available.

At that speed the downloading of high definition films could take minutes rather than hours, and taking part in multiplayer online games will become faster and easier. During the trial customers will also have increased upload speeds of 20Mb

There are currently no existing wireless routers that can sustain or even reach speeds of 200Mb.

That means the company has been forced to partner with technology companies to develop the right equipment.

Home-office

And high-end computers are also needed to keep up with the speed of the connection.

It has also added 30,600 television customers in the quarter, compared with 45,000 in the previous three months and 37,000 over the same period a year ago.

Its total number of TV customers stands at 3.65 million. The company said a significant part of the pilot involves assessing related in-home technologies.

Additionally, with high-speed broadband powering many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the home-office market, Virgin Media will be looking at ways to develop products and services for this sector through its business division.

Boot camp's call to arms in battle of the bulge

Picture: SUE ARNOLD

GI JANE: Jane Turkington, left, and Roxanne Beaverstock with Kevin Green and Jimmy Farrell. Inset: Demi Moore

SHE'S been an angel in the morning to her cleaning business customers, but from now on Sharon Smith is a boot camp commandant knocking privates on parade into shape, ***writes Nick Hudson.***

But before her conscripts consider deserting, mother-of-one Sharon is offering the ultimate reward to an army of women across the county.

The rules are simple at her new GI Jane Bootcamp: fall in and I'll guarantee you'll shift those unwanted pounds.

"Up will go your confidence, self-esteem and feelgood factor, and down will come the weight and dress size," Sharon told her first intake at Stable Cottages in Hoo.

The holiday homes setting was the perfect pick-me-up for the eight women who braved the inaugural GI Jane week – with Royal Marines Kevin Green and Jimmy Farrell providing extra "motivation".

The boot camp is a week-long, women-only course of high intensity physical exercise, designed by military trainers to kick-start a healthy new way of life.

Up to a dozen women will be asked to do things they never thought possible during the twice-monthly camps, said 42-year-old Sharon, who also runs the Angels cleaning agency in Bexleyheath.

She got the idea for her rejuvenating lifestyle training regime after going on a similar course in Hereford last year.

She set about planning her own camp, which is named after the movie GI Jane – starring Demi Moore – which tells a fictional story of the first woman to undergo training in the elite US Navy Seals.

Sharon said: "I wanted this to be a different experience for women."

Among her first intake was a real-life Jane.

And Jane Turkington proved "nothing is impossible" by shedding 15lbs and one-and-a-half dress sizes. Fellow rookie Roxanne Beaverstock managed to lose 9lbs, one dress size and was "left feeling good about herself".

The action-packed training schedule promises boxing, core training, war games, assault courses, running, power walking, skipping, riding, volleyball, netball and water activities.

"Put in the effort and you will see a significant loss in weight and inches," Sharon said.

"It's not a prison for ladies and no-one will force you to do anything you are uncomfortable doing. But you'll be amazed at what you actually can achieve."

Contact GI Jane Bootcamp on 020 8301 4353 or email info@gijanebootcamp.co.uk.

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Soaked bulls run wild after rescue

TWENTY bulls went on the rampage after being thrown into a pond when the trailer they were travelling in flipped over.

The barrage of bulls ran amok after being freed from the drink near Canterbury by firefighters on Monday. But after being pulled out of the water the bulls started getting troublesome – with one attacking a farmer as he tried to shepherd it to safety.

A spokesman for the fire service said: "The trailer was being towed when it flipped and hurled the bulls into the pond just after midday. After the bulls were safe, they went on the run-around and were chased by farmers and firefighters."

Whitstable watch manager David Nolan said: "They were obviously a bit agitated and scared from all the people and noise. They're used to just standing around and eating grass in the peace and quiet."

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THE MOTORISTS' NO.1 CHOICE FOR CROSSING THE CHANNEL

MP's high-speed ride in memory of stepson

AN MP who is still in the dark over why his beloved stepson committed suicide is raising money for a charity that can help prevent similar deaths in the UK, ***writes Chris Murphy***.

Dr Stephen Ladyman was left stunned when his stepson Karl Pike, 22, was found dead in South Africa last November.

Now the South Thanet Labour MP is to climb on board a 240mph superbike to raise money for CALM.

The former transport minister is taking part in Europe's most popular motorsport event today called Thundersports.

Mr Ladyman also appeared on Top Gear racing the show's 'reasonably priced car' around its airfield racetrack coached by the mysterious Stig.

All this week, he has been in training for the sprint races in the Personality Class at Thundersports by riding around Kent on a powerful Kawasaki road bike before taking to the track on the 200bhp Superbike.

He is known for his love of fast cars and high powered motorcycles and has owned many two-wheelers since he passed his test at 16.

He said: "I have had many bikes, but the last was just over a dozen years ago when I went around a bend and put it half way up a tree."

Waiting

He continued: "I am supporting CALM because of what happened to Karl. He had just been made head chef at a posh restaurant in Johannesburg. The inquest has still not taken place and we are waiting for toxicology tests."

Mr Ladyman said they remained a close family after he met and married Karl's mum Janet, after she split up with his father Vic.

Karl had trained to be a chef at Thanet College.

The 57-year-old Mr Ladyman said: "Karl lived with us since he was six. He was like a son to me and he played in the youth football team I coached. No-one in the family had any idea anything was wrong. This came as a terrible shock to all of us.

"Karl never mentioned anything to any of us. I was told when a police officer in South Africa rang to tell me. It was awful."

Because of this, he is now backing CALM, which can help young men in the UK who feel they have nowhere else to turn to.

Mr Ladyman will be racing at the Thundersprint event held in Northwich on a race-prepared £100,000 MSS Colchester Kawasaki Superbike.

He said: "More than 100,000 people will be there, so I am a bit nervous about it.

"I am happy on board motorbikes with power, but I am worried I may do something to this magnificent machine.

"I don't want to be the one to drop it. I can do over 130mph in first gear, so there is plenty of power – enough to get something wrong. I could stay in first gear in this event."

He added: "CALM seeks to help young men who are experiencing a variety of serious personal issues.

"The theme of the site at TheCalmZone.net is that staying silent is not being strong."

MSS Colchester Kawasaki's team principle, Nick Morgan, said: "Kawasaki Motors UK have arranged for Stephen to borrow a standard road going ZX-10R so he can acclimatise himself to the big Ninja.

"That will stand him in good stead, but he will still have be 100 per cent focused at the Thundersprint to make best use of all the technology packed onto a 200 mile an hour racing bike."

• To help raise more money for Mr Ladyman, visit his Just Giving website at www.justgiving.com/stephen-at-thundersprint.

ON HIS BIKE: Dr Stephen Ladyman on the Kawasaki Ninja ZX-10R loaned to him for training, and right, his inspiration, stepson Karl, who committed suicide last November

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Picture: THE NATIONAL TRUST

HISTORIC: The lakes and parkland at Chartwell (main picture) were designed by Winston Churchill (right)

Victory for the swans

By **CHRIS MURPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

WINSTON Churchill's beloved black swans are finally back at the war leader's home of Chartwell after an absence of more than a year.

It was the dream of head gardener Giles Palmer to return them to the mansion and two beautiful young black swans are now enjoying their new home on the lake at Chartwell, near Westerham.

The National Trust, which looks after the historical building, agreed with Mr Palmer that more swans were needed as it has been more than a year since the last ones were at the mansion. The very first were a gift from Phillip Sassoon in 1927.

Mr Palmer said they were an iconic requirement at the home, as they were much loved by Sir Winston Churchill.

Since their arrival, the garden team has been watching to ensure they are settling in. The biggest danger is from foxes and mink – which killed most of the previous birds.

Visitors have been spotting the swans as they explore the lakes and parkland Sir Winston Churchill designed himself.

The birds have even discovered the special floating swan island the head gardener had installed on the lake over the winter.

The natural protection means the unattractive fencing around the lake has been removed to return the waterside landscape to Churchill's original vision.

Mr Palmer said: "I have seen the swans on their island once or twice but am confident they will see just what they are missing out on as soon as the foliage on the island grows up.

"For now, I'm thrilled they are settling in so well and getting to know the gardens. They're getting so brave they adventured all the way to the kitchen garden recently."

It is hoped they will breed within the year, and establish a new line of black swans at Chartwell.

The modern day replacements included a pair sent as a gift from the Government of Western Australia.

The black swan, known as cygnus atratus, is a native of Australia and Tasmania and is also found wild in New Zealand, where it was introduced.

It is the world's only black swan although its flight feathers, normally almost fully hidden at rest, are white.

Visitors can meet Mr Palmer and get the latest update on the swans, as well as having a go at planting some vegetables in the kitchen garden. Simply call 01732 863087 for details of the Plot to Plate event.

Chartwell is open from Wednesday to Sunday all year round. The house is open from March 14 until November 1 from 11am-4pm.

NEW RESIDENTS: Giles Palmer welcomes the black swans to Chartwell

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EU tagging rules could see farmers fall from the flock

LAMBS TO THE SLAUGHTER: The high cost of tagging every sheep could force already struggling farmers to quit the agriculture industry

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

FARMERS being consulted on a controversial sheep-tagging ruling say alterations are necessary to stop people leaving the industry.

New EU regulations will force farmers to electronically tag every sheep in their flock from December, although there are fears the added cost of doing so will persuade many to call it a day.

A consultation being co-ordinated by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is due to run until June 23, but some believe their views are likely to fall on deaf ears.

Alan West, secretary of the Romney Sheep Breeders' Society, is one of those planning to speak out about the plans.

He said: "I have no problem with electronic identification. The problem I have is that it's going to be compulsory.

Final straw

"It's an additional cost the industry just does not need, especially when there are no obvious additional benefits.

"I'm sure Defra will listen to our comments but whether they do anything with them is another matter.

"The problem lies with the EU but Defra is not renowned for sticking its head above the parapet.

"If the regulations stay as they are, there will be some farmers who say enough is enough.

"What with the problems in the past with foot-and-mouth and bluetongue, this could end up being the final straw."

EU officials say the electronic tagging system will make it easier to identify animals in the event of a disease outbreak, but farmers say the current system of tagging works perfectly well.

Most UK sheep farmers have been against the plans since they were first made public, and they have now received backing from organisations in Spain, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden.

One part of the ruling Defra has successfully scrapped is the requirement to tag sheep under the age of 12 months that are intended for slaughter, although this has yet to be made official.

Kevin Attwood, Kent chairman of the National Farmers' Union, said farmers will still have to spend time and money tagging sheep despite the proposed amendment, with slaughterhouses and auction markets having to shell out for reading equipment.

He added: "Our argument really is what is being gained from all this?

"I think a lot of sheep producers are going to take a long hard look at what they are doing now.

"There have been slightly better sheep and lamb returns recently, but if these regulations had been introduced 12 months ago, it would have been the death knell for some of them."

A further criticism of the new tagging system is that some farmers may not be technology-literate enough to understand it, although Mr Attwood denied that was the case.

He said: "I think that's just the stereotypical view of a farmer.

"Most of us are adaptable enough. That's not the issue here. The issue is what the cost benefits of introducing this new system are."

Care home plans take off at Hawkinge airfield

MORE than 100 jobs could be created after councillors approved plans to build a three-storey care home on the site of the former Hawkinge airfield.

The 112-suite structure off Hurricane Way, Folkestone, will include a restaurant, internet café, cinema, library, lounge and gym, as well as spaces for 55 vehicles and an ambulance bay.

The go-ahead comes despite concerns from villagers about the doubling of floor space to nearly 10,000 square metres and includes a number of preconditions.

These involve encouraging greener forms of transport through bicycle parking facilities, protecting the character of the surrounding countryside and restricting what kind of patients the home can look after.

One of the objections raised about the proposal was its C2 classification, which could potentially have seen its use extend to others 'in need of care' such as drug and alcohol addicts, with Churchill Primary School only metres away.

However Ernie Graham, owner of Graham Care Group which is behind the new development said it was strictly for those with physical care needs and those suffering from dementia.

He said: "We are not rehabbing young people. There's a big need in Hawkinge to look after elderly people who may be living alone and that's what we're about."

About the change in the design plans, Mr Graham said: "Some neighbours had concerns about the new third floor and we worked closely with them.

"There was recently a meeting held for residents chaired by KCC and about 30-40 people turned up. Everyone was pretty mature and reasonable about it.

"Extra screening will be put up during construction and there is to be a community services room with a separate entrance available for everyone to use."

Mr Graham, whose company also runs five other care homes around the South East, said the third floor was necessary to help provide the extra space for the en-suite rooms and said an expected completion date had yet to be decided.

Full planning permission was also given in October 2007 for a doctor's surgery to be put up on the site, unrelated to the care home.

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Duchess' private jet had to make an emergency landing in Kent after malfunction

Sarah's mid-air scare

SAFE AND SOUND: Sarah Ferguson's jet landed at Biggin Hill for repairs

By **CHRIS MURPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

SARAH Ferguson was involved in a mid-air scare over the county's skies.

One report said part of her plane's engine cover flew off, and a member of staff confirmed that to the Kent on Sunday.

She was on board a privately owned luxury aircraft when the pilot was forced to return to Biggin Hill for repairs.

The airport said there was no danger of the aircraft crashing, but admitted it could have been scary onboard.

The member of staff agreed it was caused by part of the engine casing.

He said: "It could have been something no more than three inches by three inches, we are not talking about a whole engine cowling or anything."

He added: "You get standby incidents where a light comes on – not regularly, but I don't think was this was anything out of the ordinary.

"It was just a precaution as far as I know.

"From what I am led to believe it wasn't anything that would knock it out of the sky."

But airport director Peter Lonergan said: "They had a tech fault and they came back.

"They were on the ground for 30 minutes and then carried on their way. It was just pretty standard.

"There was no emergency at all."

But he then refused to confirm what a member of his staff had said earlier about the engine cover being the problem.

When asked what exactly the problem was, he said: "It just had a problem with… and just came back, they did a precautionary landing back and the airplane was checked and went flying 30 minutes later."

And when pressed on what went wrong, he said: "We don't have to give that information – so I won't.

"I have got no comment on that."

Sarah, Duchess of York, was on board the aircraft, apparently with friend Geir Frantzen, the 41-year-old boss of Findus Foods.

It's claimed they were on their way to his home in Norway when the incident happened on April 30.

One report said the 49-year-old Duchess, once married to Prince Andrew, was "trembling with shock".

The Piper PA-42 Cheyenne plane hadn't long taken off from Biggin Hill when the engine cover plate worked its way loose, setting off an alarm in the cockpit.

One report said the plate made a noise when it came off, but once back on the ground, it was a simple repair said staff.

The airplane with two propeller engines generally has a crew of one or two and can carry up to nine passengers more than 1,000 nautical miles at a cruise speed of 235 knots.

It later took off again, and safely completed its journey to Norway.

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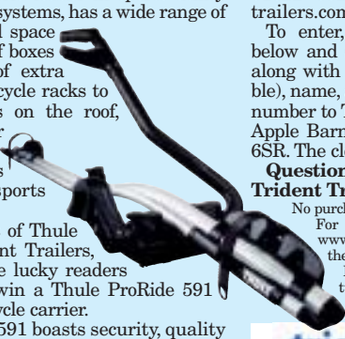

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Getting folk back into our village halls

COUNTRY SOUNDS: Three-man folk group Relig Oran (Jem Scott, Andy Renshaw, Martyn Kember) are touring Kent's village halls in a bid to keep community spirit alive

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

MEMBERS of a popular folk band aim to do their bit for country life by going on a tour of village halls in Kent.

The three-man group Relig Oran – named after an ancient burial ground on the Scottish island of Iona – have sold records throughout Europe but decided to stay closer to home for this month's string of dates.

Organiser and band member Andy Renshaw, who plays African kalimba, percussion and whistles, said the trio felt it important to bring live music to parts of the county that are "off the beaten track".

He said: "We think village halls are incredibly important.

"For a lot of villages they are the one thing left that still creates a sense of community because a lot of shops and pubs have closed down.

Generations

"England is one of the few countries that have village halls, so we want to get people into them and make sure they are not allowed to be knocked down and built on.

"The music we play comes down to us from generations of communities who have handed it on through the centuries, and no more so than here in Kent.

"The music is the heart of a culture and village halls are fitting venues for that music to be performed in.

"But once they're gone they won't come back so the more support they get, the better."

Relig Oran formed in 2006 but Andy is the only surviving member of the original line-up.

Joining him are Martyn Kember on fiddle and Jem Scott on bouzouki, vocals and guitar.

Andy said: "The other band members I started up with decided the time was right to move on, and they're with other groups now. It suits me quite well actually because the new line-up is really good and we have a lot of energy.

"We released our debut EP Tracks From The Darkside about 18 months ago and it's been great since then.

"We've been offered a lot of festival gigs and our music goes down really well in places like the Czech Republic and Poland.

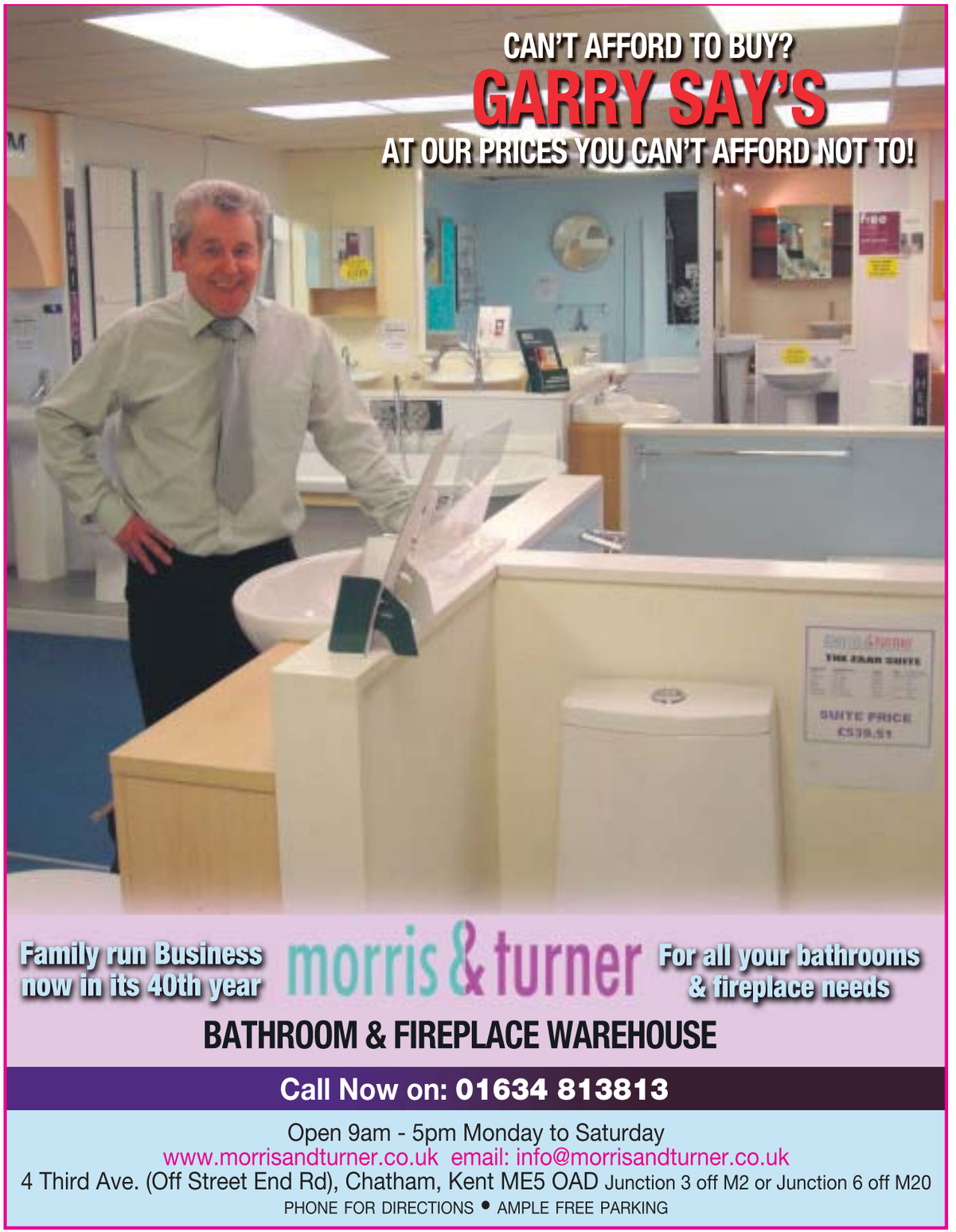
"Traditional English music has a broad appeal and people are often attracted to it quite easily.

"We like to think we're entertaining, so hopefully plenty will come to the village halls and support us and the venues on our tour."

Relig Oran's first gig on the five-date tour was in Chartham Hatch yesterday (Saturday, May 9).

They will next play at Egerton on Friday, May 15, Bossingham on Saturday, May 16, Wye on Saturday, May 23, and Dymchurch on Saturday, May 30.

Visit www.religoran.co.uk for more information.



Park guests left high and not so dry with ban

HOLIDAY-MAKERS have been left fuming after health and safety red tape meant park managers banned their washing lines.

Campers at Sheerness Holiday Park on the Isle of Sheppey are no longer allowed to dry their clothes after bosses deemed the lines were a danger to other guests.

But many have claimed the barmy rules mean they've been left high and dry after being inundated with soggy piles of clothes.

"We want our washing lines back so we can dry our undies," said park guest Jackie Skinner. "These rules are ridiculous."

The park, run by Park Holidays UK, boasts hundreds of chalets, caravans, cottages and apartments – but lines are no longer allowed anywhere on site.

Park manager Donna Hough said the ban was part of park rules, which holidaymakers agree to abide by when they sign up. She added that staff began enforcing the rules when the new season began a few weeks ago.

"We are sorry if a few holiday homeowners feel inconvenienced by our washing line restrictions – but our park rules do make it clear that aerial clothes dryers and washing lines are not permitted outside holiday homes," she said.

"This is a common restriction on holiday parks throughout the country, and certainly applies without exception on all the 25 parks owned by Park Holidays UK.

"However, we are certainly not leaving our holiday homes owners hanging out to dry.

"Self-attaching window dryers are perfectly acceptable, and the park provides a fully equipped launderette with drying machines which most people prefer to use as they achieve quicker results."

images of Kent

THIS image of poppies at Church Marshes, Sittingbourne, was captured by Stephen Groombridge of Deal.

You can see more of Mr Groombridge's pictures at the coffee shop in the Landmark Centre, Deal, until the end of the month.

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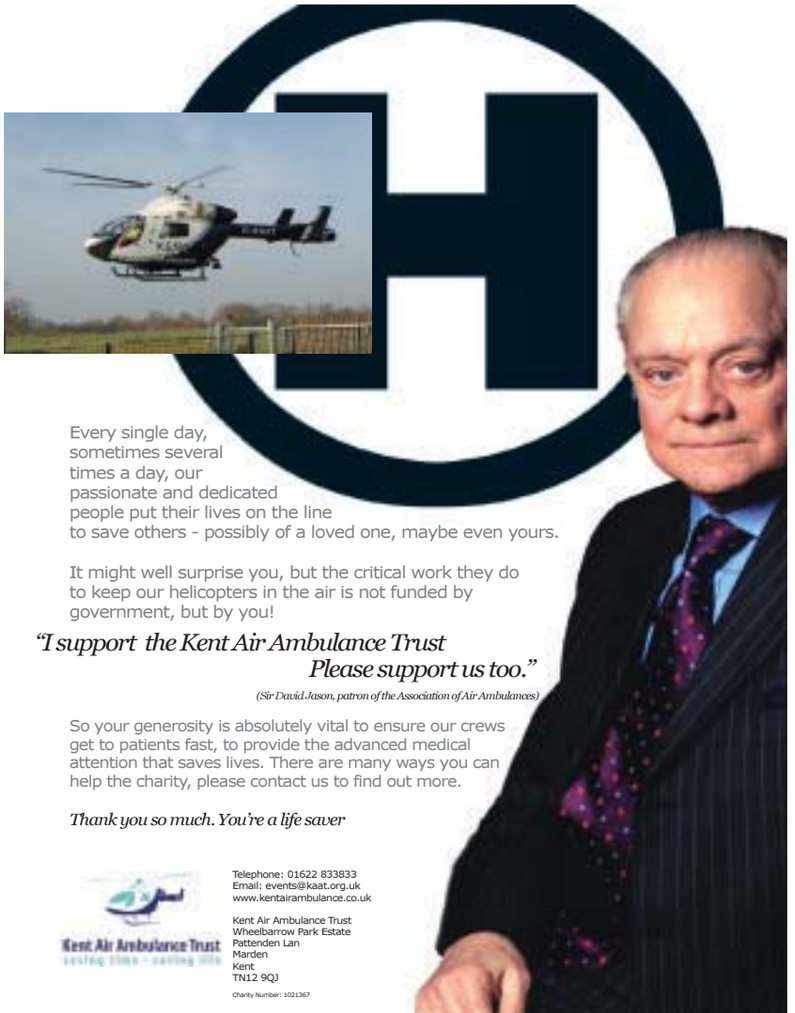

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By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

Will house solve 16-year mystery of missing man?

GONE: Karl Hotchkiss was last seen alive in April, 1993

Sister hoping the police forensic search of home will finally lead her to the truth

THE sister of a man who vanished 16 years ago says she hopes police forensics experts examining a house will uncover information to end her torment.

Police investigating the disappearance of 24-year-old Karl Hotchkiss began a two-week examination on Tuesday of a house and garden in Gravesend, where they believe his body could be buried.

Mr Hotchkiss, who was also known as Bert, left behind a three-year-old son when he went missing on April 11, 1993.

Sister Kelly, who also lives in the town, said: "Ever since Bert went missing, I have been in limbo. It's a constant torment not knowing where he is.

Murder

"There is not a day that goes by that I do not think about it. It's a part of my life I cannot shut off until I know what happened.

"I am only a year older than him and he went missing just eight months after our mum died. I knew he wouldn't have just left me like that, so soon afterwards.

"I'm shocked and do not know how to feel about the latest part of this investigation.

"I hope they find something so the torment will end, but if they do then the worst will have happened."

The investigation into Mr Hotchkiss' whereabouts was reopened in February by Kent Police's cold case team, which is based in Chatham and is part of the force's major crime department.

Its duty is to investigate unsolved murders, rapes and sex attacks, as well as long-standing missing person inquiries.

Det Chief Insp Dave Withers told Kent on Sunday it was likely Mr Hotchkiss had been murdered.

He said: "He's not been seen since 1993 and at the time he was owed some inheritance money, so if he had planned to go away it's likely he would have wanted to claim that first.

"Other information we received when we were last investigating the case in 1999 also points to the likelihood that he was murdered.

"We went to see Mr Hotchkiss' sister, son and ex-wife before we started to examine the house and they are happy that we are still looking into the case.

"They're understandably worried but we'll be keeping them regularly updated."

Forensics experts plan to dig up the back garden of 70 Jubilee Crescent and will also be carrying out a thorough search of the house itself.

The family currently living in the property, who are not connected to the investigation, were told of the need to vacate it late last week and have since been rehoused by the local authority.

DCI Withers said: "We have not taken the decision to disrupt the lives of the family living there lightly.

Tattoos

"This is an historical case and this family is not involved in any way. It is the property we are interested in as a result of our review of the case.

"It is important to see whether this leads us anywhere in the investigation."

On Wednesday afternoon Kent Police's Chief Constable Michael Fuller visited the investigation site to see his officers at work.

Mr Hotchkiss was last seen in Gravesend pubs the Old Manor Shades and the Station Inn – now The Manor and Bar 24 respectively – wearing baggy black tracksuit bottoms and green-and-black trainers.

He lived and worked in the town and was physically fit in appearance, having been a boxer when he was younger.

He was 5ft 5ins and had blue eyes, short brown spiked hair and various scars and tattoos on his body.

A 24-hour mobile police station will be situated in Jubilee Crescent for the duration of the search for anyone with concerns or information about the investigation.

Call 01634 884011 or Kent CrimeStoppers, in confidence, on 0800 555111.

TORY councillor David Royle has been sworn in as the new Mayor of Medway.

The Rainham South ward member officially took up his duties for 2009-10 on Wednesday, when he was elected at the council's annual meeting.

The Mayoress is Karen Woolhouse, while the deputy mayor and mayoress have been named as Cllr Barry Kemp and Joyce Kemp.

The mayor's chosen charities for his year in office are Kent Youth, Fairbridge in Kent, St Nicholas Day Care Centre 'for dementia'.

Council wants to keep CCTV powers to 'stop crime'

SNOOPING Medway council workers have used Big Brother-style CCTV spy cameras nearly 150 times during the past three years, it has been revealed.

Council figures show staff have used the camera network to track 148 residents since 2005, using powers made available under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

The legislation was introduced in an effort to counter terrorism and serious crime but has also been used to deal with minor offences such as littering and dog fouling.

Public authorities nationwide have sanctioned the Act almost 50,000 times since 2002 – prompting privacy campaigners to call for RIPA to be tightened.

Home Secretary Jacqui Smith has seemingly bowed to their demands by announcing plans to limit searches to only serious offences such as benefits fraud and illegal trading.

A Medway Council spokesman said any reduction to the existing legislation would have a detrimental effect on their ability to detect crime.

She said: "We use these powers in a responsible manner and only when absolutely necessary to prevent or detect criminal activity."

Was quiet village hub of Roman pottery making?

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

AN ARCHAEOLOGIST believes he has discovered proof that an idyllic village was a centre of pottery production during Roman times.

Diarmaid Walshe has been excavating a site within the parish boundaries of Otford near Sevenoaks, the exact location of which has to be kept a secret to protect the finds against looters.

He led a team of 45 archaeologists, who came from as far afield as Florida and Israel, that have uncovered two structures around 6.5ft in diameter that are thought to be pottery kilns dating from between 70-80AD.

Mr Walshe explained the significance of the find, he said: "It will show that Otford was a centre of pottery production, whether it was big or small we cannot tell, all we can say is that there was pottery production there which has not been confirmed before.

Economy

"It will give us additional information on the economy of Kent in Roman times.

"It shows there was more than likely an industry and confirms there was probably a prosperous and vibrant Roman economy to the area, which is another piece of the jigsaw we did not know before."

He said that in Roman times, rivers like the Thames were used like motorways to transport large items like pottery.

During an excavation of a large Roman cemetery in Otford, Mr Walshe said he began to think the area could have been a centre of pottery making.

"A lot of the pottery found used as the burial vessels was made locally," he said.

"In the 1920s and the 1960s there were rumours that a kiln had been found in the area.

"When I was excavating the site there were different types of pottery. But 70 per cent of all the pottery was of the same kind, which suggests something major happened there and that this type of pottery was made in the locality."

Over the last two weeks, Mr Walshe and his team have been excavating a different site and again found that around 60 per cent of the storage jars and other pottery found was of the same 'patch grove' type of Roman pottery.

This time he discovered the two possible kilns. He said: "There was lots of sooting and the shape of it matched a kiln. There are large amounts of pottery embedded in it.

"The temperature of the fire had got so hot it had burnt the natural clay into bricks, massively high temperatures of 800 degrees would be needed to do that so it was not just a fire."

FIRED UP: Archaeologists (left and right) excavate at the secret locations in Otford where they have discovered what appears to be large kilns and large quantities of clay products dating back to Roman times

More fascinating clues to the way people lived in Roman Kent will also be given because Mr Walshe said that after the kilns were shut down, the site was used as a rubbish pit.

He has sent away samples to a laboratory in Ireland for tests to be carried out.

"This will tell me what type of pottery it was, what the people were eating, the types of food and we are testing the soil to get a very close date of when the kiln was last fired.

"Hopefully scientific analysis will give us a lot of information about the way of life the people had in the 1st century around 70AD.

"In terms of west Kent it will be the first scientific analysis of their dietary habits. They were British people but they adapted to the Roman way of life."

The results of the tests are due back around the end of the month.

During the dig, the team also discovered 50 coins dating from the 1st century up until the end of the Roman Empire in the 4th century.

An early Saxon whorl, which would have been used to spin thread, was also found in the rich archaeological site.

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Jack Russell stuck 20ft underground rescued by firefighters

The terrier who got in a hole load of trouble

Pictures: IMAGES INTERNATIONAL LTD

FOR two agonising days, Stan the adventurous Jack Russell faced certain death buried deep underground after scuttling after a rabbit.

By **CHRIS MURRPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

But with the determined work of a dedicated crew of firefighters, the mischievous mutt eventually saw daylight once again.

And he didn't have a mark on him.

But Stan didn't want to be rescued – and he even nipped the hand of a fireman trying to scoop him out of his potential grave.

Owner Matt Hayes was desperately worried he may never see his pet again after Stan darted off to chase a rabbit in Quarry Wood Nature Reserve near his home in Teynham.

That was the start of a two-day drama that finally ended happily.

It seems Stan was going forwards for so long and so deep into the ground, that he eventually found he had no room to turn around, and couldn't figure a way in the gloom to back up.

The firefighters were summoned and they had to dig 20 feet into the ground both horizontally and vertically.

The rescuers could just about make out some muffled barking as Stan struggled in vain to get free.

Mr Hayes, a warden for Kent Wildlife Trust and in charge of the nature reserve, was walking his dog with girlfriend Gemma Grant on Sunday when the daft dog dashed off.

The 27-year-old said: "He loves chasing rabbits and squirrels and he was off like a flash."

At first, he had no idea Stan was deep underground and searched until midnight for the pet, thinking he was lost in the trees.

Going back Monday with park ranger Gemma, 27, they heard Stan coughing and barking from inside the rabbit hole, which is at the bottom of a 30ft quarry.

They tried to reach him themselves, but soon realised it was too big a job and called in help.

The officers from the urban search and rescue team used hammer drills, hammers and chisels to slowly chip away at the side of the quarry until they got about 20ft in after 10 hours' work, which included using a tiny camera pushed deep inside.

On a small screen, rescuers could see Stan's eyes glint in the darkness.

One officer reached in to see if he could coax Stan out, and had his fingers nipped for his troubles.

RESCUE: Top Stan bolts out of the hole to freedom; and above with his owners and the firefighters

Carl Eastwell said: "I actually managed to get my hand to him and he bit my fingers.

"I am blessed with long arms and with one final effort managed to get him out."

The trapped terrier got a glimpse of daylight shining through and made a dash for it over the backs of two firefighters.

Mr Hayes said: "He was at the bottom of the 30ft high quarry and had dashed into a tunnel at the bottom after a rabbit or something and just got stuck fast.

"He loves going down holes, but this time he bit off more than he could chew and got well and truly stuck about 20ft into the quarry wall.

"He couldn't turn around or shuffle his way out – all he could do was bark for help.

"It was so frustrating knowing where he was and not being able to get to him and I can't thank the fire brigade enough for saving Stan.

"He came out with no broken legs – in fact he hasn't got a scratch on him."

Hungry by now, Stan enjoyed a big bowl of dog food and a sausage roll.

Mr Hayes added: "There were two firemen in there chipping away at the tunnel making it wider and then all of a sudden I just saw Stan crawling over the backs of both of them until he got out.

"When he saw the sunlight and everyone around him he looked a bit confused, but I gave him a hug and a bite to eat and he seemed OK.

"I just hope he's learned his lesson."

Robber felt weight of his wrongdoing after foiled raid

AN ARMED robber escaped with nothing but bruises after two shopworkers foiled his raid by sitting on him.

The gunman ran into Charmian Beaton jewellers in Maidstone on Wednesday, but an employee from a neighbouring shop smelt a rat and ran in to apprehend him.

The drama kicked off shortly after 3.30pm when Andy Blair, who works at Skinflix Tattoos in Pudding Lane, noticed two men on a motorbike circling the area.

After stopping twice outside the bespoke jewellers, Mr Blair decided to investigate.

He said: "I said to my business partner Jackie, 'something's not right here' so I followed the bloke. As I got there Charmian had already jumped on him, and her dad Don had tried to close the door so he couldn't get out.

"Me and Don wrestled him to the ground then I saw he had a gun in his hand. I just thought 'I've got to get that off of him'. It was pretty scary."

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City's haunting secrets revealed

Author shows Canterbury's spooky side

By CHRIS MURPHY
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

FOR those wondering where all those ghosts in Canterbury hang out, a new guide book is set to reveal all.

Seeking apparitions amid the historic buildings should be much easier with help from the pages of Haunted Canterbury.

It's not just Pluckley that has the spooks. While the village still lays claim to having the most ghosts in Britain, it seems some may have moved to the cathedral city.

The new book has been published by Gloucestershire-based The History Press, and is now on the shelves of bookshops.

Canterbury author John Hippisley, 44, said: "I am very proud to finally see my name in print, and worked really hard on the historical accuracy of the content.

"I think many people reading it will be impressed by the diversity of spectral sightings in the city."

He is now launching a new daytime walking history tour of the city centre in late May or early June, which will be called Canterbury – An Alternative View.

He said it will be a sideways glance at the hidden history of the city and will be somewhere tongue-in-cheek and should appeal to residents as well as tourists and language school groups.

SPECTRAL: Christopher Marlowe

He said: "I am a ghost hunter and actor, and I run the Canterbury Ghost Tour on Friday and Saturday evenings and also all-inclusive 'ghost evenings' combining a ghost tour with a meal at the historic Sun Inn.

"I have lived in a 16th century house in nearby Harbledown since 1978, which I share with the ghosts of Victorian children. I saw my first ghost at 13, but did not begin actual phantom sleuthing until 1995."

He now has plans to offer French and German language tours in the near future.

Mr Hippisley said: "For 10 years I have wanted to offer daytime tours and now that my new co-producer Alan Flint has joined me, we can finally begin to do them.

"I do not want to compete directly with the excellent tours available from the Canterbury Guild of Guides. Our tours will simply be a mildly satirical and sometimes quizzical look at the hidden history of Canterbury's city centre, covering areas such as Butchery Lane, the Duel of William Corkine and Christopher Marlowe's life in the city.

"We'll also cover the role Geoffrey Chaucer played in the re-building of the City's Westgate Towers following the Poll Tax Riots of 1381, and the Great Fire which destroyed parts of the city in the 19th century, plus we'll also be explaining the origins of little gems of English language phraseology such as 'to the bitter end' and 'raining cats and dogs'.

"I clearly remember being dragged round a city or two in the past while being talked 'at' rather than 'to' about history, and thinking that it was irrelevant and I would never use it.

"What I have done is simply re-visit the bits of the city's history and language that still fascinate me – and I am sure these will also interest others and inspire them to learn more by visiting the some of city's many fine museums and attractions."

• ***Haunted Canterbury is published by The History Press and is priced £9.99. Tours can be booked on 07779 575831 or email: canterburyghosttour@gmail.com.***

ON TOUR: John Hippisley (above) has just published a book about Canterbury's ghosts and will be doing historic tours around the city

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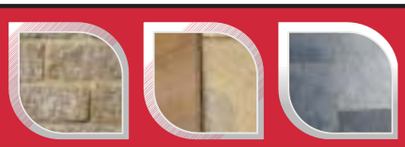

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Picture: LES WILLIS

MEDICATION: Chris the fox is responding well to new treatment

Fox is bushy tailed again

AN URBAN fox rescued from the streets was found to be suffering from epilepsy.

But after a series of trial-and-error medicine doses, he is back to his old healthy self once more.

The fox, named Chris by staff at a wildlife sanctuary, was spotted badly injured wandering the streets of Gillingham.

After his initial rescue, and despite the best efforts of the Fox Project and volunteer Susan Chadwick, he was simply too tame to be put back in the wild.

The friendly fox was often seen in his enclosure by visitors to the Wildwood Trust near Canterbury.

But over the months keepers noticed Chris was acting strangely and then one of them saw the animal having a fit. The keeper team called in a vet to check the creature out, and it was discovered he was suffering from epilepsy.

Chris was put on medication that initially seemed to solve the problem, but after a few months he was again unwell. The vets changed the medication and the fox can once again be seen playing in his enclosure.

Wildwood keeper Cali Bebbington said: "When Chris started to sleep all day and not want to play we had an idea there was something wrong.

"And when one of us saw him having a fit we knew he was not well, but his new medication is working a treat."

Man arrested in £80k drug bust

POLICE officers who raided a cannabis factory seized more than 550 cannabis plants and over four kilos of dried cannabis leaves that were ready for sale.

Police estimate the haul has a street value of approximately £80,000. The electricity meter had also been by-passed.

Officers from the Faversham Neighbourhood Team raided the smallholding in Throwley Forstal Road, Throwley Forstal, at 10am on Thursday, April 30.

A 59-year-old man arrested at the scene has now been released on bail pending further inquiries.

Latest chief constable to keep his eye on the ball

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

ANDREW Trotter has been keeping a closer eye on the Football League play-off possibilities than many people over the last few weeks.

But unlike supporters of the clubs battling it out in their quest for promotion, this man of Kent is not interested in who beats who en route to a thrilling Wembley showdown.

And that is because as the new Chief Constable of the British Transport Police, Mr Trotter is more concerned about the trouble rival sets of fans could create on the train-ride home.

Hooligans

Speaking to KOS Media just days after his appointment was made public, the former Kent Police chief inspector said football hooliganism was still a big problem.

He said: "One of the main things our officers have to deal with is violence and disorder on the railways, and particularly football fans at the weekend. Whatever people say, football hooliganism has not gone away.

"We follow particular clubs throughout the year – clubs like Newcastle United, Cardiff and Leeds – and we watch relegations and promotions carefully to see who will play each other next year.

"That also applies to who might play at Wembley in the play-off finals. At one point it was a possibility that Cardiff could face Swansea in the Championship final, which obviously has the potential to create trouble."

Kent's only Football League club – Gillingham – have reached this season's League Two play-offs and if they triumph over Rochdale today will be going to Wembley, but Mr Trotter said the team's fans were generally well-behaved.

He said: "I can't speak for every club, but Gillingham's name is not one that crops up very often, and I would spot it if it did because I still live in Kent and have a passing interest.

"But it's not always about violence between rival sets of supporters. It's often about fans getting drunk, shouting, urinating and being generally horrible to other rail passengers."

Mr Trotter, who lives in Tonbridge with his wife Kate, worked his way up through the Kent Police ranks before leaving for the Metropolitan Police and then the BTP.

For more than five years he has served as deputy to current Chief Constable Ian Johnston, who will officially step down from his post this summer.

Given the current economic climate, Mr Trotter admitted he had landed the top job at a difficult time.

He said: "The BTP has made some huge strides over the last few years, with significant reductions in crime and big improvements in crime detection.

"But the challenge we have now is on the force's budget, as we are funded by the railways which are suffering just as much as everyone else at the moment.

"We've had a number of years of significant expansion in our budget, but now there's a lot of pressure on us to improve our efficiency because there isn't as much money about and we don't know how long this recession will last."

Terrorism

Mr Trotter said the BTP tackled similar problems to those experienced by regular police forces up and down the country – including terrorism, murders and robberies – but that he was in charge of only about 4,000 officers covering an area stretching from the north of Scotland down to Cornwall on the South West coast.

But despite the pressures of the job, Mr Trotter said he was looking forward to getting his hands dirty.

He said: "Working with the BTP is similar to working for Kent Police, but entirely different at the same time due to it being smaller but covering a much larger area.

"But whether it's working in Maidstone town centre on a Saturday night or trying to reduce crime on the trains, I've enjoyed it all and I'm really looking forward to the challenges ahead."

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ON TRACK: The new Chief Constable of the British Transport Police is Kent's Andrew Trotter

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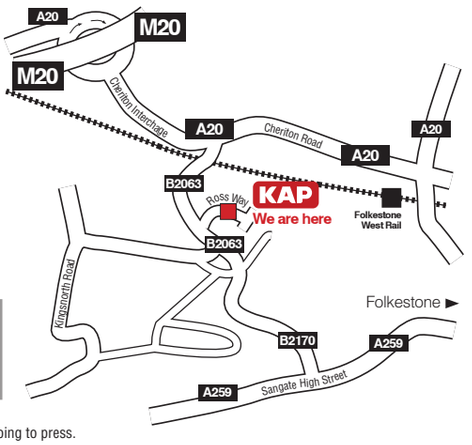

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Paul's a good friend to have

Former TV and stage star unearthing talent for the future

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

WEST End star Paul Nicholas says he hopes youngsters attending his two new acting schools may one day follow in his footsteps.

Best known for his role as Vince Pinner in the popular 1980s sitcom Just Good Friends, Nicholas has since forged a reputation as a highly successful producer of stage musicals.

He has now also lent his name to 26 acting schools throughout the country, the newest of which was officially opened in Bromley on Tuesday with Bad Girls star Vicky Alcock also in attendance.

Another school is due to be launched in Chislehurst later this month.

Confidence

Nicholas, 66, told Kent on Sunday he had always been impressed with how well-educated the children he had worked with in the past were.

He said: "I've worked a lot in pantomime over the years, including at the Churchill in Bromley a few times, and I'm always very struck by how polite the youngsters are and how much they enjoy what they are doing.

"They always seem to have a great deal of confidence.

"I never went to drama school and was always quite shy as a child.

"I've now seen that by performing and being allowed to learn about acting, you can learn a lot about yourself.

STARS OF THE FUTURE: Paul Nicholas with members of his acting school and (right) with Jan Francis in hit 80s TV sitcom Just Good Friends

"Those who sign up to the school do not have to try to break into the business if they don't want to. It's about character-building and, most importantly, having fun."

Nicholas' first brush with fame began in the 1960s when he attempted to break into the pop charts under several stage names, but he achieved only moderate success until moving on to the West End.

There he played major roles in classic shows such as Jesus Christ Superstar and Grease before returning to the charts in 1976 with hits including Dancing With The Captain and Grandma's Party.

His high-profile television career followed, and today he owns a production company with former actor David Ian that has seen success with shows such as Evita, Singin' in the Rain and Saturday Night Fever.

Specially-skilled

Although his name is now connected to dance schools as far north as Whitby in Yorkshire and as far south as Plymouth, Nicholas admitted he prefers to leave things to the professionals.

He said: "I always go along to the launches and I play an active part in how the schools look, but Karen Roberts is the managing director and she's the teacher. "She's been doing this sort of thing long before I met her.

"I'm not a teacher and this sort of education needs specially-skilled people. The schools are in very good hands."

The Paul Nicholas School of Acting and Performing Arts caters for children aged four to 18, with a two-hour session costing £8.

Nicholas said it was entirely possible that youngsters who were committed enough could one day find themselves performing on the West End stage as he once did.

He said: "Some have already starred in television commercials and various other things, and it's inevitable that some kids will go on to do well, while others won't.

"These schools have only been open for about three years, so none of them are ready to be in Grease just yet. But hopefully in a few years' time they will be turning up for auditions."

• Visit www.pnsa.co.uk for more information or call the Bromley school on 0208 462 9447.

Blue Flag day for beaches

SEVEN of Thanet's beaches will be flying a Blue Flag this summer.

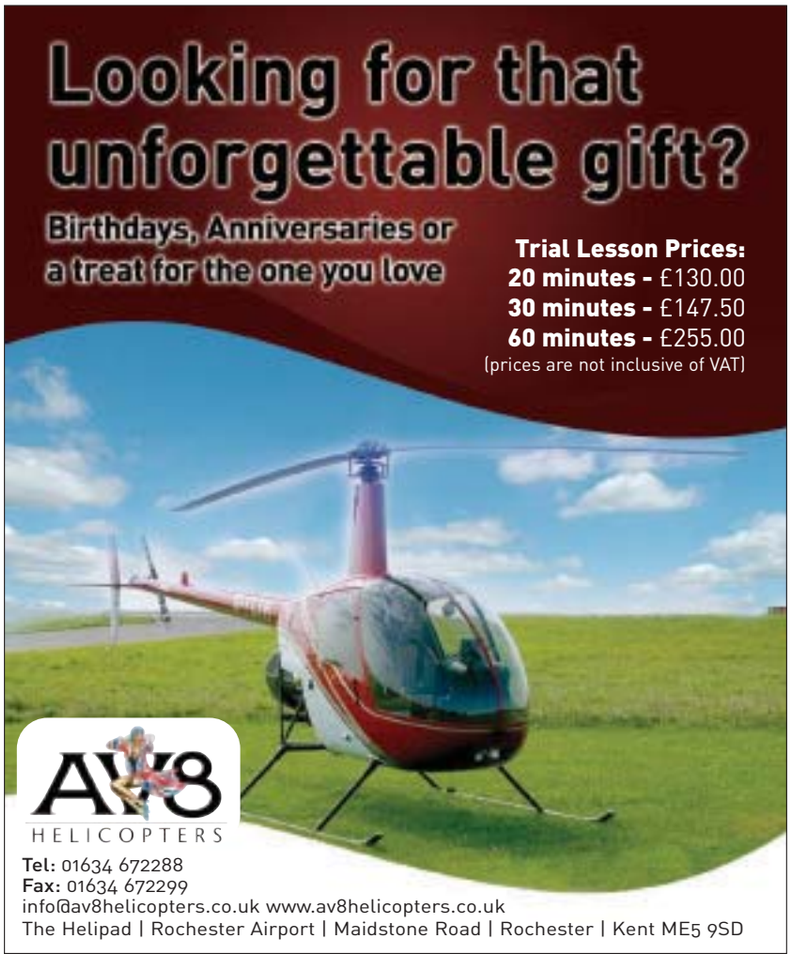
And Margate's Main Sands, Westbrook Bay, Stone Bay and Viking Bay beaches all achieved Quality Coast Awards.

Beaches have to match strict criteria to achieve the Quality Coast Award, including clean sands, being free of litter and dog mess, good access with good facilities and meeting guideline water quality.

Minnis Bay, St Mildred's Bay and West Bay in Westgate, Walpole Bay in Margate, Botany Bay and Joss Bay in Broadstairs and Ramsgate Main Sands will also fly Blue Flags, which only go to those beaches that have achieved the highest quality in water, facilities, safety, environmental education and management.

Thanet council's director of environmental services, Mark Seed, said: "Once again, Thanet has achieved an enviable haul of Blue Flags and Quality Coast Awards, which we're delighted with.

"Thanet has among the highest number of awards in the country and it sends out the clear message that we've got some of the country's best beaches and is a great start to the summer season."



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Medics' idea to cut use of antibiotics wins praise

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

AN INNOVATIVE procedure to reduce the unnecessary use of antibiotics has been praised as good practice by the Government.

Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust's Mark Stewart, a consultant general surgeon, and Dr Armando Gonzalez, a consultant microbiologist worked together on the new procedure, which could now be used across the NHS.

Health minister Lord Darzi launched the Innovation for a Healthier Future scheme last week, which will make a £220 million fund available to help staff develop new ideas to improve the NHS.

Challenges

A further £20m will be available to provide awards of up to £1m for staff who come up with inventions to tackle the country's biggest healthcare challenges, such as childhood obesity and the treatment of dementia.

The fund has faced criticism about how the cash-strapped NHS, which must make efficiency savings of £2.3 billion this year, can afford to reward staff for innovation.

But the Government believes doctors and other frontline staff will come up with money-saving ideas that will improve healthcare standards.

Dr Gonzalez, who works at Dartford's Darent Valley Hospital, said the Government's plans to boost innovation in the NHS would help more procedures and ideas like his and Mr Stewart's be implemented.

INNOVATORS: (l-r) Dr Armando Gonzalez, Dr Mark Scott from NHS Innovations South East and Mr Mark Stewart

He said: "I think as long as people like us are identified as innovators it will be a very good thing.

"We are happy it has been flagged up. Colleagues from other trusts had realised what we had done and said 'we thought about it but never raised it'.

"I do not know if it was because they did not have the courage or because of a lack of time and other priorities, but they did not do anything about it.

"But I am sure people will be encouraged by the publicity and attention the Government is giving to innovation."

The consultants won an award from NHS Innovations South East for their idea, after Mr Stewart approached Dr Gonzales because he was concerned swabs were being overused and unnecessary antibiotics were often being prescribed.

The overuse of antibiotics is linked to the development of hospital infections such as Clostridium difficile and MRSA.

Jenny Kay, director of nursing at the trust, said: "It is well documented that certain wounds form a barrier to bacteria; the barrier also prevents antibiotics entering.

"Mr Stewart and Dr Gonzalez recognised that this is a very general phenomenon.

"The trust's support has allowed them to put that understanding to use, allowing us to avoid unnecessary and harmful screening that is likely to lead to inappropriate prescribing."

Mr Stewart and Dr Gonzales recognised that most infected wounds do not benefit from antibiotics because they surround themselves with a fibrous barrier.

The barrier prevents bacteria from entering the patient, but before the doctors' breakthrough such wounds would have been swabbed, tested for bacteria, which is almost always there, and antibiotics would have been prescribed.

A spokesman for the trust said: "Antibiotic use in this situation is normally unnecessary and ineffective since the fibrous barrier also prevents the antibiotic reaching and killing the bacteria.

"More importantly, any antibiotic that does cross this barrier may promote antibiotic-resistant bacteria such as MRSA."

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CHRIS BRITCHER
CAMPAIGN EDITOR
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Julie Maddocks meets the woman behind the coolest product in Kent

A simply delicious way to enjoy the summer

ICE cream has evolved considerably over recent years.

The likes of Haagen Dazs and Ben & Jerry's have taken the humble dish and elevated it to a whole new level of quality and accessibility. Yet, as with so many things, just once in a while the mass-produced products find themselves eclipsed by something a little more, well, home grown.

And it is from Kent that one particular product has grown a reputation which seems to make it destined for national appeal.

As such, it perfectly fits our 2009 campaign encouraging our readers to support local growers, suppliers and producers, spearheaded by our website www.foodforkent.co.uk.

Simply Ice Cream grew off the back of a successful catering business – an aspect of the overall package that proved such a hit with customers, they inundated caterer Sally Newall with demands for more.

Her homemade recipe was proving a taste sensation and it quickly became apparent the dish was worth pushing as a business in itself.

The businesswoman started selling the ice cream through her farmshop in Sellindge, near Ashford, in 2005, prompting an incredible chain reaction. Six months later five more shops starting selling it, then 15 in 2007 and now it's stocked in 65 locations in and around Kent, landing a host of top awards, and more recently securing a distribution deal to be stocked in a number of Kent outlets of the upmarket supermarket chain Waitrose.

Just to enhance its position further, celebrity TV chef James Martin used the honeycomb variety on his BBC show Saturday Kitchen – and declared it the "best bought ice cream available".

What's more, it uses as many locally produced flavours and fruits as possible.

Mrs Newall explained: "We make it by hand. Traditionally, ice cream is made by skimmed milk powders and water and they can pump quite a lot of air in. So we've tried to make it like it used to be made.

"We use double cream, milk and sugar and fresh fruit. They are as natural as possible. The fruit is all from Kent when we can get it – last year we did strawberry, cherry, blackcurrant – and we try to source things as locally as possible.

"If we make it ourselves we know what goes into it. There are no additives or preservatives; which is at the heart of our ethos. We try to avoid that where possible."

Sally Newall was bought up in Kent, and apart from a five-year stay in Australia, has lived in the same area of the county all her life.

The Simply Ice Cream business in based in the village of Bonnington, near Ashford

She added: "I am surprised at how it has taken off. With all small businesses there are peaks and troughs, and our business plan has always been to double our turnover year on year, which we have managed to do, but there are still some moments where I wonder what am I doing."

After clinching the Waitrose deal, talks are now under way to take the product across the UK – spearheaded by its hugely popular Honeycomb Crunch variety.

Julie Maddocks paid a special visit to the kitchen where Sally Newall creates her award-winning Simply Ice Cream brand. And you can see her try her hand at creating the product which is turning heads, by logging-on to our website, www.yourkenttv.co.uk. Simply search 'ice cream'.

Take a bite of the cherry as new walk blossoms

A SPECTACULAR array of cherry blossoms greeted children visiting Doddington Gardens for the launch of a walk celebrating some of the county's finest fruit.

Pupils from Lynstead School were treated to a cream tea at the Produced in Kent event, which unveiled the cherry-inspired route as a taster for an expected bumper summer harvest.

Produced in Kent are supporters of our local food campaign and www.foodforkent.co.uk website.

The new 3.6 mile circular walk runs from Doddington Church, following footpaths, quiet country lanes and a mix of traditional and commercial orchards – which will ripen in July.

Produced in Kent is creating a brochure to tie in with its 'Cherry Ripe' trail which will feature details of the many Kentish firms selling cherries found along the new walk.

Julie Monkman, manager of Produced in Kent, said: "We've all heard of the benefits of eating five and day and consuming more super foods and Kent can stand proud and shout loud about its own super fruit. There is clear evidence that food grown, picked and consumed locally retains more of its natural goodness and cherries are packed with antioxidant vitamins A and C."

For more information about Produced in Kent and the new Cherry Blossom walk, visit www.producedinkent.co.uk.

You'll be full of beans when you runner in competition

FOLLOWING on from last's year successful competition, Hempstead Valley Farmers' Market is offering customers the opportunity to try their hand at growing runner beans.

And you can pick up some freshly planted runner bean seeds this weekend by popping along to the market, where you can get some top tips too.

Growers must then bring their longest runner bean along to the market between 10am and 2pm for judging on Sunday, August 9, or Sunday, September 13.

There will be prize of a hamper of local produce for the winner with the longest runner bean – the competition is open to both under 14s and over 14s.

Hempstead Valley Farmers Market is held on the second Sunday of the month between 10am and 2pm in Green car park, Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre, Gillingham.

foodforkent.co.uk We are committed to adding more local suppliers to our online service and any local business or producer that wishes to join our campaign should contact us at foodforkent.co.uk or email us at feedback@kosmedia.co.uk

KENT ON SUNDAY

COMMENT

House building needs structure

WITH an ageing population and young people struggling to move up the rungs of the property ladder it is clear that Kent needs new homes.

But as the final South East Plan was published this week, with a target for more than 650,000 new homes across the region by 2026, it is far from clear how the Government is planning to provide them.

Ministers have noted that it is critical for new properties to be constructed but the construction industry is suffering badly in the recession along with the housing market. If developers are persuaded to take on the projects, Kent does not have the infrastructure to cope with such ambitious house building.

The county has been asked to take on its fair share of the burden of providing these new homes, but more information is needed about how this is to work in practice.

Otherwise, without the proper facilities and infrastructure it is going to be a burden that is too great to stand.

Good luck Gills

FOOTBALL fans throughout Kent will be keeping their fingers crossed Gillingham are victorious in this evening's do-or-die encounter with Rochdale.

While the Gills have only attracted an average attendance of about 5,000 this season, there are many who would relish the opportunity to watch the county's only league side back at Wembley. Here's hoping a packed Priestfields can roar the home side onto victory.

OPINION: Britain's identity crisis

Labour's ID cards are the thin end of a very nasty wedge, argues Ian Taylor

ALMOST unnoticed, the Government has created a quasi-police state with (soon-to-be) ID cards (compulsory in all but name), passport interview centres, surveillance of phone calls, emails and internet use, medical records transferred and details of children, held without consent.

Let's start with a question. Do you have curtains on your windows? You probably draw them each night because you don't want the world gazing in on your private domain. This is the essence of personal privacy. Some things are simply not the business of others, even if you have nothing to hide.

Acts of Parliament already exist that threaten the last vestiges of our already seriously eroded privacy. This is leading to a situation where every move a person makes is liable to be monitored and recorded – which means potentially controlled. The British have always prized their freedom from State interference.

Gordon Brown is ruthlessly removing that freedom in an attempt to avoid embarrassing headlines over immigration and crime. The Identity Register that will sit behind ID cards represents an instrument of control in the hands of the State – that's any future government.

We are just starting to get the effects of the ID Cards Act. First-time applicants for passports are now being called in for interviews at special offices – Kent's are in Dover and Maidstone. This will become increasingly onerous as more personal details are required (up to 50 are specified in the Act), along with requirements to give fingerprints and possibly other biometric data. Over the next few years this will be extended to all passport holders on renewal. ID cards would be "offered" along with passports.

The cost of passports is rocketing as a result. The next step could well be the imposition of these details and an ID card in order to obtain a driving licence. ID cards are already in existence for foreign residents. Later this year the intention is to make them compulsory for certain categories of workers, starting with airport staff. So much for it being voluntary.

It is then likely that students will be "offered" ID cards. Will it be possible to get a student loan without one? After that I predict life will get more and more difficult without ID cards.

It may be impossible to open a bank account, access public services or transport, even get a job or buy a drink. We will have sleepwalked into a quasi-police state.

All this is costing billions that the country simply cannot afford, in order that we can all be "tagged and tracked" in a way currently reserved for criminals. The National Identity Register will be able to cross-reference with just about any other government (or other) database.

There's the Contact Point children's database, already started, tax records, the proposed NHS central spine (your medical records uploaded), any number of databases held by local authorities and quangos, and the records now going to be kept of phone calls, emails and internet use. Add in the potential from police records (including DNA from innocents), the DVLA, automatic number plate recognition cameras, not to mention all those CCTV pictures, and the opportunities for the State to rule every detail of your life become boundless. Why should we want this? Will it cut crime, in particular identity theft? Unlikely. In fact, with so much information centrally gathered, you could be even more at risk. We all know how bad governments and others are at keeping our details secret.

Illegal immigration? There are other ways of dealing with that and the illegals don't exactly come with ID anyway. How about terrorism? Again, no. Terrorists usually have impeccable ID and make no attempt to conceal their identities, only their intentions.

Our fundamental relationship with the State is being changed. In theory, the State exists to serve its citizens. Unless we do something to prevent it, we shall all be in the position of having to prove who we are, day in, day out, just to be allowed to get on with life. People point out that other European countries have long had ID cards. True, but usually after they had been introduced by either totalitarian regimes. If you value your liberty and privacy, you might care to question every politician who comes asking for your vote.

• Ian Taylor, co-ordinator of the NO2ID campaign's Dover branch

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You're so out of touch

The defeat of the Government in the House of Commons was more than just a victory for the Gurkhas, it was a victory for fairness and common decency.

Gordon Brown's thoroughly mean-minded proposal to deny these loyal soldiers the right to live in the country for which they have fought so valiantly for nearly 200 years offended a deep-rooted sense of justice in the public, and united MPs of all parties, including many Labour members, in angry indignation.

All the more disappointing, therefore, that Thanet MP Dr Steve Ladyman chose to ignore the wishes of his constituents and vote in favour of the heartless measures proposed by the Government. Once again, Gordon Brown and Dr Ladyman have shown themselves to be out of touch with public opinion.

Richard Rowson, Wingham

Whitehall's cowardice

How can the Government allow criminals, murderers, paedophiles and terrorists into this once great country, but refuse entry to the Gurkhas?

Gurkhas are brave and honest. Two words that are apparently alien to our Government. In March last year, an Australian paedophile was allowed in and on the same day a Gurkha was refused NHS treatment for injuries received during war.

An Italian who killed a headmaster was allowed to stay as his human rights would be breached. Abu Qatada, the "hate preacher", cannot be deported as again his human rights would be breached.

It would appear that if you are English your human rights do not exist.

The stupid thing is that the number of Gurkhas who would be allowed in is the same as illegal immigrants who enter on a quarterly basis.

David J Morby, Erith

Our new forces' sweetheart

As a former British soldier, I take my hat off to Joanna Lumley for supporting the Gurkhas, who I have great admiration for.

I am also very grateful to the MPs who had the courage to vote against the Government in favour of the Gurkhas being offered equal rights of residence.

However, I am very disappointed that Thanet South MP Dr Steve Ladyman chose not to vote for an equal right of residence for all Gurkhas, despite being the president of Margate Royal British Legion.

We allow thousands of people to settle in the UK every year – what makes the Gurkhas so undesirable?

I suggest the Gurkhas should stay and the Government should go. I also feel Dr Ladyman should reconsider his position as president of Margate Royal British Legion – otherwise he risks the possibility of that decision being made for him.

Charles JA Goddard, Wesgate-on-Sea

Now it's time to belt up

KCC leader Cllr Paul Carter's statement about "belts being tightened" should not apply to his chief executive Peter Gilroy, whose expanding salary has surely led to a loosening of his waistband.

Perhaps if Cllr Carter's administration had been a little more circumspect with public money rather than handing it over to the gaming tables of the Icelandic banks they would be less prone to failure and belt tightening would be unnecessary.

Robert Muir, Westgate-on-Sea

A holiday from reality

KCC, self-styled "one of the best-run councils in the country" is paying its chief, the best-paid council chief in the country (naturally) another £12,000 for missed holiday entitlement. Is there no way to stop the squandermania of this spendthrift outfit? Presumably he was paid while not on his holidays? According to The Times he earns £207,100 and was paid an additional 'bonus' of £31,065. What the hell is going on?

Adam Astere, Minster

Crossing taking its toll

The Dartford toll should be scrapped not only because of the pollution, bad as that is, but also the lost revenue caused by the long hold-ups waiting in queues. Vehicles standing idle earn no money.

David Hall, by email

Revenue comes first

Can I remind RC Priggen that the original concept was for toll charges to be removed in 2002 when the Dartford Crossing had been paid for (Letters, May 3). The Government reneged on this promise and not only kept the charges but increased them. The environmental issues caused by the sheer volume of traffic seem not to bother this supposed 'green' Government. Obviously revenue comes first.

John Austin, by email

Easing the bottleneck

RC Priggen claims there is need for a further crossing of the Thames because of congestion. He fails to recognise the reason the congestion and associated pollution is created.

As vehicles approach from the south they expand into 13 lanes to go through the toll booths, pay their money and now, more often, have to wait for change (with increase of toll from £1 to £1.50), and then move off to combine back into four lanes to go through the tunnels.

A steady four lanes and no toll booths would not have that problem. Approaching from the north, congestion is again created as vehicles leave the bridge, expand to 13 lanes and the compress back after the toll booths. Here there are more lanes, so slightly less of a problem.

The other problem with proposals for a further crossing is that is not a stand-alone solution. On both sides of the crossing there would need to be motorway standard roads to take the traffic onto the major road networks – A2, M20 or possible M23 to the south, A127, A12, M11 to the north – even if limited on day one, they would be needed eventually to avoid the congestion that would be created on other roads. Of course, it is also very likely it would need tolls to pay for it and give a return on investment to the private sector, so we would see the problems of the Dartford Crossing again. I notice the idea of making this a multi-modal crossing with links

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YOUR LETTERS

KOS Media welcomes your comments and letters for publication. Please send correspondence to: Letters to the Editor, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR. Alternatively fax them to: 01303 817002, or email them to editorial@kosmedia.co.uk. Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances. Please also include a daytime telephone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit letters.

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BIRTHS

ASHBY
Paul and Jane of Whitstable are proud to announce the birth of their daughter, Katie Louise, on 18th April 2009 weighing 5lb 14oz.

BAILEY
Madeline Leigh born on 29th April 2009, weighing 7lbs 13oz. Daughter to Jason and Tracy in Ramsgate. Precious little sister for Ellie.

BAILEY
Rachel and Scott proudly announce the safe arrival of their first son Alexander on 07/04/2009 at William Harvey Hospital Ashford.

BARLOW
Sorayah May born on 17th March 2009, weighing 7lbs. Daughter to Tanya Marie Barlow.

BOWMAN
Kay and Rob of East Malling are pleased to announce the birth of their beautiful son Jack Robert Peter Bowman born on 8th April 2009, weighing 5lb 13oz.

CRAWLEY
Jodie and Jason of Margate are delighted to announce the birth of their son Noah Solomon, born on 28 March 2009 at QEQM Hospital.

CROXSON
Vicky and Brett of Herne Bay are delighted to announce the birth of their second son, Jake Oscar Lewis Croxson, on 7th April 2009. A new brother for Sonny.

FRENCH/BATES
Rachel and Lewis celebrate the birth of their daughter Amy May French, weighing 7lb 15oz, on 24th April 2009.

HILL
Andrew and Victoria would like to announce the birth of their beautiful daughter Kiera Ruby on the 16th April 2009 at QEQM Margate weighing 7lb 12oz. A little sister to Alfie George.

LEWIS
Jack Edward born 1st May 2009 weighing 8lb 14oz son of Craig and Victoria of Tonbridge, Little Brother to Thomas.

LUMPKIN
Blake born on 24th April 2009, weighing 8lbs 14oz. Son to Donna and Lee Lumpkin in Ramsgate.

ROFFEY
Gavin and Jennifer are pleased to announce the birth of their baby boy, Spencer James on 27th April 2009. A brother for Sam and Sophie.

STOCKLEY
Charles and Emma are proud to announce the birth of Grace Isla born on 25th April 2009 weighing 8lb 4oz. Little sister to Joshua.

DEATHS

CARNEY
Patricia Hetty Carney passed away at home on 23rd April 2009. Funeral to be held at Medway Crematorium. Funeral enquiries to Tender Touch Funeral Services Sun Lane Gravesend.

HOGARTH
Lena Maud Lowdon Hogarth, formerly of Coventry passed away peacefully after a long illness on 21 April 2009 aged 82. Will be sadly missed by Norman, Carol, Mark and family.

MAHONY
Stewart died peacefully on 2nd May 2009. Funeral service to be held at Aylesford Priory on 11th May at 1pm.

OXLEE
Don Oxlee of Herne Bay passed away peacefully on 29th April 2009. A much loved husband, dad, grandad and great grandad who will be very sadly missed. The funeral was held at Medway Crematorium on Wednesday 6th May 2009.

PACKINGTON
Maurice Packington, aged 93, of Tankerton died peacefully at The Whitstable Nursing Home on April 28th 2009. He will be greatly missed by his beloved wife Connie, his family world wide and all who knew him. Any enquiries to Lyons Funeral Directors of Canterbury.

PARK
Mrs Joyce Park died suddenly on the 23rd April at home in Sturry. For Funeral arrangements please contact Lyons of Canterbury.

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between the railway lines to the north and south of the river appears to have been gently dropped now.

In the meantime all it takes is for the Dartford Crossing tolls to be removed and the road constrained to a consistent number of lanes and almost all the congestion will be removed – a much cheaper solution and one that limits the impact on the environment.

Chris Fribbins,
Dickens Country Protection Society, Rochester

Why not waive fees?

I agree wholeheartedly with RC Priggen about congestion at the Dartford Crossing.

I must however take issue with Simon Pearce's letter in the same issue.

While I agree with his sentiments generally, I and many others are of the opinion that if the tolls were scrapped, the traffic flow would be much improved. Strange how, particularly with the southbound traffic, that as soon as the tolls are crossed there is little or no congestion.

I have observed this many times from the bridge looking towards the tolls (while stationary in my vehicle).

The congestion is not confined to rush-hour, as is often suggested. Since the fees were raised, car users now have to fumble for the extra 50p, along with left-hand-drive foreign truckers who I have often witnessed having to leave their cabs to pay the toll, causing more delays.

I would like to propose a challenge: why not have a trial period where the toll is waived? Or is it, as I fear, that the road-user cash cow is there to be milked?

David A Thurman-Newell,
Minster-on-Sea, Sheerness

Jersey isn't in Kent …

Three cheers for your Food for Kent campaign – but only two-and-a-half for chef Richard Philips' recipe last week. Why Jersey new potatoes? There are many new potatoes in this area, and even if they don't quite match the best of the Jerseys they are as good as, if not better, than some of the so-called Jerseys sold hereabouts. Let us strive to make even more use of our Food for Kent.

Chris Berry, Faversham

I'll second Ivan's idea

Last week you published an excellent idea from Ivan Armstrong of Meopham, that each constituency should provide suitable, not grand, accommodation in London for its MP, furnish it adequately and maintain it to a reasonable standard.

This would eventually prove much cheaper as it would be loaned to each succeeding MP in its entirety, no more TVs, washing machines, etc to be claimed. No future expenses other than general maintainance costs. Many thanks for an excellent newspaper, if only some of our national papers could produce the same quality.

O McGregor, Aldington, Ashford

Squandering millions

I am glad Paul Browne (Letters, May 3) agrees with me that treatment for Parkinson's disease was in fact developed in human patients and that it is true that millions spent on animal experiments relating to Aids research over the last quarter of a century has not produced a single cure.

Even through Mr Browne tries to dress up animal tests as an answer to all our ills, I believe it is he who has not been reading the medical literature, as he seems unaware that many scientific, viable alternatives exist to animal experiments but the vivisection community and vested interests such as Pro-Test – who have built their reputations, careers and are used to spending billions of taxpayers' money on animal experiments – seem unwilling to adopt these faster, cheaper and more reliable methods.

He also misleadingly claims that most doctors support vivisection, which is not the case, as when asked if animal experiments hinder medical progress and can be misleading due to physiological and anatomical differences, 83 per cent of doctors agree. I am also astonished that he completely failed to address the main concern of my letter, that data obtained from laboratory animals do not predict serious and sometimes fatal reactions in humans and that the Government has never commissioned or evaluated any formal research on the efficacy of animal experiments and has no plans to do so.

G Collins, Canterbury

The killer question

Paul Browne (Letters, May 3) makes, on the surface at least, a convincing case for the continuance of animal experimentation for the purpose of scientific advancement. Few would contest that animal research has resulted in significant medical progress benefiting mankind.

However, the question remains: do some humans have the right to test painful treatments on other mammals because they view them as subordinate species that are intellectually inferior? Monkeys, rabbits, rats, mice, etc, have central nervous systems and feel fear and pain just as we do, yet they are denied the opportunity to voice their discontent while held in captivity in a laboratory.

There is a whole multitude of ethical alternative methods of lab work that can be performed to discover cures for serious diseases. The reason why experimenting on animals has always been a medical scientist's preferred choice is because it costs less money to put into practice.

Clive Wilkins-Oppler, Canterbury

Navy caught in a flap

The fact that there was a Fleet Air Arm flypast at Eastchurch on May 1 is meaningless (Kent Remembered, last week).

The Navy does not have any reason to celebrate this particular date and day as the first naval flying wing was not established at Eastchurch until December, 1911. Naval officers were under training before this date at Eastchurch, but December, 1911, is the correct date for the establishment of the Royal Naval Air Service. How on earth could the Navy have got this so wrong?

Robin J Brooks,
aviation historian and writer

The 'do nothing' party

Frankly, I find it amazing that Conservative councillors hold up their hands and say nothing can be done about traffic bottlenecks in Sevenoaks and Swanley.

For years the Liberal Democrats have been calling for a park and ride in Otford Road, a scheme which has been systematically rejected by the Tories.

Walking buses, walking and encouraging more safe cycling are also sound alternatives, as council official Daniel Whitmarsh admits. We should also encourage drivers to switch to smaller, more fuel-efficient cars, and those that run on less-polluting biofuels.

Dr Alan Bullion, Tunbridge Wells

Learning the hard way

Surely even the Tory dimwits on KCC smelled a rat when the Government poured billions into the Building Schools for the Future programme.

It was meant to squeeze grammar schools out of existence. The Government, like the Conservative administration on KCC, is inept and incompetent. Except that Labour has now mastered the art of obfuscation better than the Tories ever did. Not that they can spell it.

The Labour Party, as I discovered to my growing dismay when I was a principled young socialist – ah, happy days – hated excellence, hated success, hated people what could speak proper, hated people who could think for themselves. In short they hated education: especially quality education.

Yet, there was a time when Labour was the party of grammar schools. It was the means by which working-class boys (Harold Wilson) and girls (Margaret Thatcher) could gain an education commensurate with the best of the public schools. I was never against grammar schools. I saw them as the foundation stones of better quality education for all. I looked forward to a time when we had technical, craft and sport schools teaching all children to their highest attainable level.

Labour's bile against the nobs has been redirected at good schools instead. They couldn't abolish public schools so they went for the working and middle-class schools instead and replaced them with god-awful, bog-standard comprehensives housed in Stalinesque concrete blocks so beloved of past Labour education ministers, mostly public school educated boys and girls and ashamed of it.

Under Labour education has dumbed down to the point where George Orwell's predication of a limited vocabulary for the masses, Newspeak, has all but been achieved. The Conservatives under Cameron are too gutless to fight for a better education system: too frit to restore grammar schools as the flagships of a high standard all-in education system.

We, the people, must kick all the politicians out of education once and for all. They have done nothing but harm.

Gerry O'Donnell, Thanet

Shameful behaviour

I am appalled by the behaviour of opposition politicians in Medway, who this week leaked confidential information about proposed primary school changes before Medway Council had an opportunity to tell parents, pupils and teachers.

Clearly Labour councillors don't understand that making changes to our primary system is a painful process for everyone and has to be dealt with sensitively. Where is their concern for children? We are proposing to make changes to 19 of Medway's primary schools because the Government requires us take action in schools where there are more than 25 per cent of empty places.

We have followed exactly the guidelines given to us by the Government, which says we must reorganise primary provision and amalgamate or close schools where there are surplus places. There is no secrecy, only confidentiality, (which is quite different) and is maintained to protect pupils and staff.

Now that we have the Department for Children, Schools and Families' agreement, everyone interested in the proposals, including current and future parents, has the opportunity to express their views in the forthcoming consultation. By opposing this, Labour councillors are against their own Government's policies, which it is actively encouraging in Medway. By leaking it and playing politics, they have shown complete disregard for our children's wellbeing, when children should be their first and only consideration. Shame on them.

Cllr Les Wicks, Medway Council

EU's nazi nightmare

By using Winston Churchill in its campaign launch for the European elections, (Churchill the European, Letters, May 3) Ukip is obviously portraying what Churchill represents to most British people – a free and democratic Britain governed by its own Parliament at Westminster.

Back when Churchill was speaking of a united Europe, it was still spoken of as Britain and Europe, with Britain as a separate entity. In no way did he suggest we surrender our recent hard-won fight to be free from enslavement by a powerful Germany. That would have been, and still is, totally unaceptable to the British people.

Having been tricked into relinquishing the British Empire by cunning American politicians, we gained something better, the Commonwealth which can offer us ample raw materials for the food and manufacturing industries and export markets for our goods and services. The EU has only high-priced food and manufactured goods plus trouble to offer us. It is inconceivable that Churchill would expect us to dissolve our ancient Parliament in favour of a

Letters continue on next page

German/French led conspiratorial set-up that the EU is today.

Anyone having read the book When Nazi Dreams Come True will see the EU is nothing less than what a victorious Germany was planning for Europe after 1945.

The book tells of a Central European Bank in Germany with control over all countries occupied by the Germans, a common agricultural policy, social welfare programmes and every institution we now have set up and controlled by the EU.

The only difference being it is Brussels and not Berlin that has Europe by the throat today. National governments would have been abolished by a victorious Germany after the war and regional adminstrations under central control would have been set up.

Today Brussels is planning to do the same and is forging ahead creating the necessary departments in readiness for when the Lisbon Treaty/European Constitution is ratified, giving it the absolute right to do what it likes without the consent of the people of all countries in the EU. The British constitution enshrined in the Bill of Rights of 1698 forbids any government here from giving this country away to anyone without the consent of the people. It is on the statute books to this day. Every British government since Heath's has concealed the truth about Europe from us, but to their own cost.

Today most people do not trust any politician about Europe and most people want Britain out of the EU once and for all.

Euro-fanatics choose to distort historical facts to suit their own agenda. Such treacherous aspirations will see this wonderful country of ours wiped off the map for ever.

Roger Arnold, Herne Bay

Back-door takeover

I cannot believe for one moment that Winston Churchill would have agreed to allow our country to be governed from Brussels and Strasbourg, as it certainly seems to be. Work with all the European countries, but certainly not to the point of having two huge European parliaments at such a vast cost.

So many gave their lives in the war so that we could remain free. To then be taken over through the back door is unbelievable. Yes, work with all the countries in Europe, but we must never to be governed from Europe.

Jill Collin, Ukip Medway

Power without scruples

I was interested to read about the Conservatives' manifesto, not least the surprising assertion that they will support Kent's grammar schools.

Is this the party whose old Etonian leader said not a year ago that he was not in the business of supporting selective education? You wouldn't want poor children doing well, now would you?

Or is this the same party which last month announced its education policy would be to have super-comprehensives, with some schools being run by firms?

This is consistent with the Tories' national strategy of having the same policies as Labour to save any tiresome inconveniences such as principles interfering with the smooth handover of power between identical establishment parties.

The only party committed to maintaining selective education is Ukip. Indeed, the Tories sacked their education spokesman for pointing out that non-selective pupils also do better at school than similar pupils in a comprehensive school area.

Quite how Kent's Conservatives expect us to vote for them when they are plainly at odds with their own leaders is beyond me.

Conservative county councillors should follow Mr Wheeler's example and join Ukip, because if we did not have to pay for belonging to the EU we would have the £40 million they lost in Icelandic banks in just one day.

Quentin Williamson, Ukip Dartford

Loud and clear, Hazel

Despite more than 40 years of politician-watching, I was still amazed at Hazel Blears' claim that Labour's problems were due to "not getting the message over".

Having saved nothing during the good years, or done anything to halt the credit explosion, which obviously made them look good while it lasted, Labour has landed us with debts our children will be left to pay off.

Gordon Brown got two per cent of the poll on a Labour website asking party members who they considered the best Labour leader over the last 30 years.

Labour's enemies have a cornucopia of self-inflicted wounds to rub salt into. So yes, Hazel, we've already got the message, loud and clear: Labour isn't fit to run a whelk stall.

Have MPs really no idea the contempt in which they are held for their refusal to be honest, truthful, honourable and to respect the needs and wishes of the electorate? Yet come election time, they'll be talking about voter apathy.

Phil Granger, West Malling

A great running total

On behalf of the Meningitis Trust I would like to congratulate Jeremy Trott from Maidstone, Adrian Musson from Bromley, Rick Clarkson from Bromley, Mark Mellon from Gravesend, Gordon Findlay from Sandwich, and Christopher Hall from Sevenoaks who ran the Flora London Marathon 2009 as part of our All Stars team, with 106 others.

Even with the heat, the six were successful in completing the challenge. All our runners raise crucial funds for us through sponsorship and this year we hope to reach £200,000. As we are reliant on donations to continue our work, events like the marathon are essential to our future. With support from determined people like Jeremy, Adrian, Rick, Mark, Gordon and Christopher, we are able to help about 20,000 people each year, supporting anyone affected by this life-changing disease through our free professional aftercare and support services.

These include: a freephone 24-hour nurse-led helpline (0800 0281828), counselling, financial support grants, home visits and one-to-one contacts. We are grateful for the runners' commitment and we would like to express our thanks and congratulations to them. We are always looking for people to help with our work. Visit our website for more information about what we do and how you can help, www.meningitis-trust.org.

Emma Lowther, Meningitis Trust

Cutting cancer risks

At the start of Cancer Prevention Week (May 11-17), I am writing to let people in Kent know they can make a real difference to their cancer risk by making relatively simple changes to their diet.

Research shows eating plenty of fruits and vegetables probably reduces risk of several types of cancer and this is why World Cancer Research Fund recommends people eat at least five portions a day of a variety of fruit and vegetables.

We also recommend cutting down on intake of red and processed meat, salt and alcohol because of evidence that these increase risk.

Overall, scientists estimate about a third of the most common cancers could be prevented through eating healthily, being physically active and maintaining a healthy weight.

If your readers want to find out more about the links between diet and cancer, we are giving away a free copy of our Eating Well for Cancer Prevention booklet to the first 100 people who call 020 7343 4205 and quote "media". It can also be downloaded at www.wcrf-uk.org

Lisa Cooney, head of education, World Cancer Research Fund

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Sweetener for future apprentices

Picture: BBC

SWEET AS SUGAR: The BBC's hit show The Apprentice highlights the benefits of apprenticeships to UK firms

THE latest move to increase opportunities for youngsters taking up apprenticeships has been announced, ***writes James Arnold***.

The new National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will be responsible for the end-to-end delivery of apprenticeships across England and aims to increase the availability of apprenticeship places. It comes amid fears over dwindling numbers of apprentices and a Government need to address how to subsidise wages. It is one of a number of initiatives being rolled out, among them a high-profile TV advertising campaign featuring Sir Alan Sugar extolling the virtues of apprenticeships.

The NAS is taking over the apprenticeship scheme from the soon to be abolished Learning and Skills Council.

It is tasked with trying to reverse declines which have seen more than 2,000 apprenticeships cut short in the construction industry as the recession bites.

NAS chief executive Simon Waugh said: "We will be building on what has already been an incredible renaissance in apprenticeships.

"In the last decade apprenticeship numbers have already more than trebled. NAS has been created to continue this rise and solely focus on delivering more apprenticeships. We will provide a dedicated, responsive high-quality service for employers and learners.

"Research proves apprenticeships are an optimal way of training and developing skilled people for the future. Businesses across the country are increasingly realising the enormous benefits apprenticeships create, not only in terms of a highly skilled workforce but also by boosting productivity and staff retention."

Mr Waugh said research revealed that 94 per cent of more than 3,800 apprentices questioned believed the process had given them better job prospects, higher salaries and a boost in confidence and social skills.

Announced in January and launched this month, NAS reports to the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

It will be responsible for the funding of apprenticeship places and given the task of fulfilling the Government's ambitious commitment of ensuring every suitably qualified young person has the right to an apprenticeship by 2013.

Its main focus will be to make it as easy as possible for employers to take on apprentices, streamlining the application process and offering support and advice at every step for both the employer and learner.

There are 180 apprenticeships across 80 industries and the Government has made it clear it believes the scheme lies at the very heart of boosting the UK's economy.

A new online matching service has already been helping employers advertise vacancies and prospective apprentices to apply for apprenticeships. To date more than 10,000 employers and almost 54,000 candidates have registered for this service and there are more than 4,000 vacancies available.

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Go along, it will be an education

WEST Kent College is staging two evenings this month for those looking to dive headlong into further education.

On Wednesday, the college – in Brook Street, Tonbridge – will stage an evening aimed at adult learners.

The evening will focus on access to higher education, part-time courses and adult literacy and numeracy. It runs from 5.30pm to 7.30pm.

A day later, the college holds its general open evening for students at all levels.

Running from 5.30pm to 7.30pm it will cover art, design and media, construction, electronics, engineering, hair and beauty, hospitality and catering, IT, motor vehicle engineering, music and performing arts courses on offer.

For full details, visit www.wkc.ac.uk.

Chance to learn more at college

SOUTH Kent College is throwing open its doors at its three main campuses on Thursday.

The open days at the Ashford, Folkestone and Dover offices will showcase the 300 courses the sites offer and give prospective students the chance to learn more.

The student support services team will be on hand to talk about career information and funding, and those wishing to speak to an independent education and careers guidance advisor can book a free appointment. Tutors will also be on hand to give insight into the courses. The open day runs from 2.30pm and 7pm. For more details, click on www.southkent.ac.uk.

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Domestic Abuse Family Intervention Worker
Salary £18,343p.a. (£30,730pro rata)

The Rising Sun Domestic Violence Project Wishes to appoint a Domestic Abuse Family Intervention Worker. Three days a week for a 1 year pilot project funded by the Primary Care Trust (PCT). The successful applicant will work intensively with complex families where Domestic Abuse is the primary presenting issue. Interest in assessment and attachment based work an advantage. Professional qualification required and experience of working with children and families. Own car is essential as the post involves travel within the Canterbury district. Interested applicants can phone for an informal chat. Only women need apply – Exempt under Sex Discrimination Act 1975,7(2)(E)

An enhanced CRB check is required for this post. Applications to be returned by Friday May 15th. Interviews will be held on Friday May 22nd. For an application pack please
email: emma@rsdvp.co.uk or telephone Emma on 01227 452852

REQUIRED FOR CARE HOME

2 Part time cleaners – 16 hours per week
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1 Care Assistant – Full time
For more information call
Maralyn – Tel: 01227 721527
Email: cares@littlebournecarehome.co.uk

Learning Support Assistant Required

This position is currently temporary with a possible permanent placement for September.

Hythe House Education is a small independent secondary school based in Sheerness Kent. The pupils range in ability and can show challenging behaviour.

We are seeking an individual who can demonstrate enthusiasm and resourcefulness working within a small established staff team. The ideal candidate will demonstrate a firm but fair approach and be able to contribute to the existing good practices of the school.

The yearly salary for the position is £10,000 for term time only, hours are 8.45 - 3.15 per day.

For an application pack or further details please contact: Hythe House Education (01795) 581006 Or E-Mail: robertduffy@hythehousesupport.co.uk

Alzheimer's & Dementia
S U P P O R T S E R V I C E S

Registered Charity Number 1024385

Require a
BME SERVICE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER
30 hrs per week £20,000 p.a. pro rata

Alzheimer's & Dementia Support Services (ADSS) is the main provider of multicultural dementia services in N.W Kent.

Are you able to engage with minority community groups to raise awareness of dementia among black and minority ethnic(BME) people in West Kent?

The post holder is expected to support the development and delivery of dementia services for people from BME communities.

To request an application pack please telephone: 01474-533990
or email: sue.harman@alz-dem.org by 19th May 2009

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Alternatively, please call 01303 774888 for an application form or download one from our website.

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26. The Advertiser agrees to indemnify KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd in respect of all costs, damages or other charges falling upon the media owners or any of the companies within the KOS Media Group as the result of legal action or threatened legal action or threatened legal arising from the publication of any advertisement or advertising promotion.
27. An order for an advertisement shall amount to acceptance of these terms and conditions, and any condition placed on an order by an Advertiser shall be null and void in so far as it conflicts with them.
28. Copyright in advertisements produced wholly or partially by the media owners belong to KOS Media (Publishing) Ltd. Advertisers may not reproduce such advertisements without the media owner's written consent.

All terms and conditions stated above are in place to protect the advertiser, the media owner and the communities they serve within the public domain as well as the beneficial rights of individuals and organisations. KOS Media will endeavour to always act reasonably in applying its terms and conditions.

Effective from June 2008

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The Academy of English Studies, Folkestone requires the following staff:

CELTA QUALIFIED TEACHERS

from June until December 2009.

A dynamic, flexible and creative

SOCIAL ORGANISER - Immediate start.

For further information please contact info@aesfolkestone.co.uk or call 01303 210808

We also require **HOST FAMILIES**. For details contact Eliana on 01303210808

Laleham Gap School

Laleham Gap caters for pupils from 3-16 and is the county's leading provision for pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties.

THE FOLLOWING STAFF ARE REQUIRED FOR SEPTEMBER 2009

Both Posts will be paid Kent Scheme 3 (£14099 – 15984 pro-rata)

TEMP 1:1 LSA

27.5 hours per week, term time only, between 8.50 am – 3.30 pm Monday – Friday. The role will be working flexibly across all subjects at our secondary school in Margate. An interest/flair for ICT would be an advantage.

RESIDENTIAL CARE WORKER (MATERNITY COVER)

To provide cover for up to one year for 35 hours plus 2 "sleep-in" duties per week during term time. Hours are primarily between 3 - 10 p.m. Duties include planning and supervising activities for groups of residential pupils, preparing some meals and on-call duties when doing sleep-ins. NVQ 3 in Care would be favourable.

We are also keen to speak with people who may be interested in any type of casual/relief work in the school.

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the young people in its care and all posts are subject to an enhanced CRB disclosure.

Closing Date is Monday 1 June

Please send a LARGE SAE for an application pack to the address below clearly indicating which post you are interested in.

Debbie Terziyski, Laleham Gap School, Northdown Park Road, Margate CT9 2TP
E-mail: Debbie.terziyski@laleham-gap.kent.sch.uk

The Folkestone academy

Required for September 2009

TEACHER OF ENGLISH (KS4 Coordinator)

TLR 2B (currently £3,940)

An enthusiastic and dynamic qualified teacher of English is required to join our thriving and successful team. The Folkestone Academy is about to embark on an exciting journey towards becoming Kent's first All Age Academy with students from age 4 – 19.

We are seeking an ambitious teacher with the energy and drive to support the leadership of the English team taking responsibility for Key Stage 4. This is an ideal opportunity for a well qualified teacher to gain experience for future faculty leadership.

Full details and an application form are available on our website **www.folkestoneacademy.com**
Alternatively, telephone Sally Taylor on 01303 842400

Closing date: Monday 18 May at 5pm
Interviews: Friday 22 May

The Folkestone Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check.

The Folkestone Academy, Academy Lane, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5FP • Tel: 01303 842400
Email: admin@folkestoneacademy.com

Valence School

Waking Night Student Support Assistant

Shifts are 10 p.m. until 8 a.m. Term Time Only.

This post involves working waking nights, and supporting students with their personal care needs over the night. There are a number of nights available.

Kent Scheme Band 3 (pro-rata) • £14,099 - £15,984 full time equivalent plus unsocial hours allowance

Valence School is a KCC all age residential school for children and young people with physical disabilities, complex medical needs and associated learning and communication difficulties.

Valence School is committed to safeguarding and promoting every student's welfare. We expect all staff to share our commitment. The successful applicants will require an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Check.

For further information and an application form, please contact Lee-Anne Fossett.
Please note the closing date for applications is Monday 18th May 2009 at 4pm.

Valence School, Westerham, Kent TN16 1QN
Tel:- 07887 727182 Fax: 01959-565046
e-mail: vacancies@valence.kent.sch.uk

Teachers wanted

Local Teachers for Local Schools

We have 100's of permanent positions throughout Kent for qualified teachers, teaching assistants and school support staff.

Email paul.chuter@timeplan.net or call 01732 373340

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email: harrisonj@sirjosephwilliamson.medway.sch.uk

A Voluntary Controlled School specialising in Mathematics, Computing and Humanities
An 11-18 Boys' Grammar School of 1180 students including 300 in the co-educational Sixth Form
'OUTSTANDING' Ofsted November 2008 –
"a buzz of excitement pervades the school"

Teacher of Spanish and French

An enthusiastic teacher is required to cover maternity leave from 1st September 2009. The Modern Languages department enjoys a newly equipped language laboratory and run trips to Spain and France on an annual basis. The school is twinned with Lycee St Marc near Bourgoin, and has e-mail links with schools in Spain.

The successful candidate will be an effective classroom practitioner and be committed to enabling all students to achieve their full potential

OFSTED 2008 commented that students have a "willingness to participate in the wide range of opportunities available to them, to show initiative and to assume responsibility". Behaviour was found to be "exemplary".

If you are interested in applying for this post, then please contact the Headteacher's PA, Mrs Jacqueline Harrison, or visit out website www.sirjosephwilliamson.medway.sch.uk

We are committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and any offer of employment will be subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check

Closing date for applications – 20th May 2009

SUTTON VALENCE SCHOOL
North Street, Sutton Valence,
Maidstone, Kent ME17 3HL
www.svs.org.uk

HMC: CO-EDUCATIONAL: 11-18 BOARDING AND DAY: 533 PUPILS

TEACHER OF ENGLISH (Maternity Cover)

Required for September 2009 for two terms: a well-qualified and enthusiastic graduate to teach to GCSE and A Level. The successful candidate would also be expected to contribute to the extra-curricular life of the school.

Salary will be on the school's own scale.

Further details, including an information pack, are available from Sarah O'Connell, the Headmaster's PA: telephone 01622 845203 or e-mail: hmsec@svs.org.uk

Closing date for applications: 11th May 2009 Interviews: 19th May 2009

Sutton Valence School is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Sutton Valence School
A member of the United Westminster Schools' Foundation
Founded in 1576 by William Lambe

Saint George's Church of England School
Humanities College

Meadow Road, Gravesend
Kent DA11 7LS
Tel: 01474 533082 Fax: 01474 561536
HEADTEACHER: Mrs A Southgate BDAKC

Church of England, Voluntary Aided, Humanities College
11-18, Mixed, Comprehensive School

TEACHER OF HUMANITIES

Required for September 2009
Main Pay Scale

We require a well-qualified, enthusiastic and innovative teacher of humanities who is committed to raising the achievement of our students.

Saint George's C of E School is a successful, innovative and over - subscribed Humanities College. This post comes at an exciting time for the school as we are preparing for new buildings under Wave 4 of BSF.

Saint George's C of E School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All appointments are subject to List 99 and enhanced CRB checks.

Contact us to request further details and an application form.

Email **dhariwalj@saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk** or visit our **website www.saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk**

Closing Date : 15 May 2009

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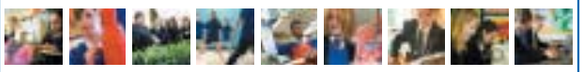

Teaching Vacancies for July/September 2009:

SCIENCE, ICT, FRENCH AND GIRL'S PE

If you are ambitious to 'get on' in the profession then there is no better place to start than at Spires Academy, where you will have the opportunity to work with experienced and committed teams of practitioners.

Spires Academy opened in September 2007 and achieved excellent results at KS4 in its first year with GCSE results in English and Maths rising from 18% to 32%.

In appointing teaching colleagues, we look for candidates who enjoy working with young people and forge positive relationships with them. An enthusiasm for new approaches and ideas is also important.

Further details of all posts and application forms are available on our website www.spiresacademy.com or alternatively, contact Marion Wigington at m.wigington@spiresacademy.com

Closing date: 15th May 2009.

Spires Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to appropriate child protection screening including checks with previous employers and the Criminal Records Bureau.

CHILDCARE INSTRUCTOR/LECTURER REQUIRED

Hours: 8.30am – 3.30pm, Term-time only
Salary: Dependent on experience

Instructor for a new childcare course is required for June 2009. This is an exciting opportunity to lead and develop this new initiative which will have its first student intake in September 2009.

The successful candidate will be an individual who has experience of teaching within this sector and who has a vision as to how Pent Valley Technology College can provide real life applied learning experiences for its students in the childcare industry.

Good interpersonal skills are extremely important. This position is suitable for an energetic person who enjoys being with teenagers and can cope with a busy learning environment.

For more information and an application form please contact:
Miss S Spratley, Pent Valley Technology College, Surrenden Road, Folkestone, Kent. CT19 4ED.
Email: samantha.spratley@pent-valley.kent.sch.uk
Tel: 01303 277161 ext 2218 Fax: 01303 279342

Closing Date: 12th May 2009

Interviews: Week commencing 18th May 2009

Pent Valley
Acheivement for all

Gravesend Grammar School for Girls

A Specialist Science College

Pelham Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 0JE
Telephone: 01474 352896 Fax: 01474 331195
Website:www.ggsg.org.uk
email: enquiries@ggsg.org.uk

Science

TEACHER OF MATHEMATICS

Maternity Cover – September 2009

We are looking for a well-qualified and enthusiastic Teacher of Mathematics to join a highly successful Faculty. The person appointed would be required to teach up to A' Level. Maths is a very popular option with students and a high proportion go on to study a Mathematical course in Higher Education.

The person appointed will receive high quality mentoring and support. The Faculty enjoys excellent facilities and equipment.

We have been a Specialist Science College since September 2004; this has led to a broad range of innovative practice across the school and we are looking to develop cross-curricular projects involving Mathematics.

The School has a high profile for achievement locally and nationally and prides itself on a strong record of internal professional development including a full induction in the Summer term.

The School is also an Investor in People and an Investor in Careers.

Application forms and further details are available from the Headteacher's Personal Assistant, Mrs M Tong Ralphs. Completed forms should be returned by post, fax or email for the attention of **Mrs E Wilson, Headteacher** no later than

Thursday 21st May 2009

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Saint George's Church of England School

Humanities College
Meadow Road, Gravesend
Kent DA11 7LS
Tel: 01474 533082 Fax: 01474 561536
HEADTEACHER: Mrs A Southgate BDAKC

Church of England, Voluntary Aided, Humanities College
11-18, Mixed, Comprehensive School

LEARNING MENTOR

Years 12 & 13

KS6 Pts 17-20 £18,471- £20,262 (pro-rata)
£15,586 - £17,098 (actual) 37 hours per week / Term Time Only + 5 days (39 weeks)

We are seeking a Learning Mentor to support students in reaching their full potential. Applicants will need to have a good relationship with students and an understanding of the issues that hinder learning. Strong communication skills to work with individuals, groups, teachers, families and carers will be needed.

Saint George's C of E School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

All appointments are subject to List 99 and enhanced CRB checks.

Contact us to request further details and an application form.

Email dhariwalj@saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk or visit our website **www.saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk**

Closing Date : 19 May 2009

WALMER SCIENCE COLLEGE

Salisbury Road, Walmer, Deal, Kent, CT14 7QJ
Telephone : 01304 375212 Fax : 01304 380766
e-mail : admin@walmersciencecollege.co.uk
Headteacher : Simon Heaton BSc (Hons) NPQH.

MIXED 11-18 HIGH SCHOOL 789 ON ROLL
REQUIRED FOR 1st SEPTEMBER 2009

TEACHER OF MATHEMATICS

This could either be a full-time post or 0.6 FTE (MPS – R&R ALLOWANCE FOR SUITABLE CANDIDATE)

POSSIBILITY OF 2 I/C FOR SUITABLE CANDIDATE

The post would be suitable for either NQTs or more experienced teachers. A comprehensive induction programme will be offered whatever your status.

The successful applicant will:-

- be a creative teacher with the ability to motivate students of all abilities;
- be enthusiastic and energetic;
- have a commitment to raising standards;
- have a commitment to providing a first class learning experience for all our students.

Walmer Science College is a good school with outstanding features (Ofsted 2007)

Walmer Science College is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and the successful applicant will be required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure via the CRB. For an application form and further details, please contact Mrs Windsor at the school.

Closing date : 19th May 2009

We value diversity in our workforce INVESTOR IN PEOPLE Kent County Council

Xtra WESTKENT

Resident Involvement Manager

Based in Sevenoaks and Swanley. Job Ref: KOS/WKE020

Spot Salary £28,520 pa
37 hours a week

West Kent Extra (WKE) is a thriving community development charity based in Sevenoaks and working with communities in west Kent and beyond. We are a subsidiary of West Kent Housing Association, one of the UK's leading housing providers.

The national agenda on resident involvement is changing, with the formation of the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) and a move towards resident-led self-regulation.

We are looking for someone who understands these changes and will work with our staff and tenants to ensure we make positive changes to the way we work.

We have a proud tradition of resident involvement work and this is a great opportunity for you to join an established and successful housing association, as part of our Operational Management Team.

You should have a passion for working with tenants and customers and the drive and commitment to ensure they are able to influence and engage with us, in a positive and productive way.

You will be an excellent communicator able to connect with a range of tenants, staff and partner agenices to promote the value of resident involvement.

You should be able to work well on your own initiative, contribute to an existing team and be prepared to go the extra mile to ensure customer satisfaction.

You will need to have a driving licence and access to a vehicle for business use. The post includes an Essential Car Users Allowance and is subject to an enhanced CRB check.

For more information and to download an application pack, please visit our website or call Colleen Coode on 01732 749420 .

Closing date: 18 May 2009
Interview date: 28 May 2009

West Kent Housing Association aims to provide excellent customer service, equality and opportunity for all we house and employ

View our current vacancies online at www.westkent.org

To advertise in this section ✆ 01303 817040

Swale BOROUGH COUNCIL NORTH KENT COAST

Benefit Officer x 3

37 hours
£14,982 - £22,494 pa

We currently have vacancies for one permanent and two temporary Benefit Officers. The temporary posts will be offered as one year contracts.

Based at Sittingbourne, but sometimes working at one of our three district offices in Sittingbourne, Faversham and Sheerness, the main responsibilities of this role will be to check, calculate and maintain Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit claims and give face to face or telephone advice to the public on all matters relating to those benefits and also Council Tax account issues.

It is essential that you are either educated to GCSE standard at grade C including Maths and English, or an equivalent qualification such as NVQ level 2 in a subject area such as Business and Finance or Administration, or that you have at least 2 years' experience in a related area of work such as a customer service or financial administration environment, preferably within Housing Benefit or other Social Security Benefit role.

You must be able to show good computer keyboard skills and knowledge of Microsoft Office packages would be an advantage.

We are looking for people who have good communication and team working skills and the ability to learn quickly. A comprehensive training programme will be provided to develop your skills and knowledge.

The starting salary will be dependent upon qualifications and experience.

We welcome applications for flexible working arrangements.

In addition to salary, we can offer you a generous annual leave allowance, paid bank holidays, flexi time and the Local Government final salary pension scheme.

For further information contact Human Resources, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT. Telephone Sittingbourne (01795) 417414 (24 hour voice mail) quoting reference number 477CS1.

E-Mail: hr@swale.gov.uk Website: http://jobs.swale.gov.uk

Closing date: 26 May 2009
Interviews: w/c 8 June 2009

HARBOUR SPECIAL SCHOOL
Elms Vale Road, Dover CT17 9PS
Tel: 01304 201964
E-Mail: admin@harbour.kent.sch.uk

Learning & Achieving Together

Teaching Assistants

Kent Scheme, Band 3, Points 7-11 + SEN Allowance
£14,099 - £15,984 (pro-rata) 30 hours per week, term time only
Start: ASAP

Harbour Special School has a mixed roll of 96 students between the ages of 5 and 16. The school is a day special school for children with a combination of behaviour and learning needs. The completion of a 2-year building project in 2007 has seen the school accommodation extended and modernised with excellent new facilities now available.

The Governors are seeking to appoint two Teaching Assitants to join our dedicated and highly effective staff team who are bright, full of ideas and enjoy using their own inititive.

The successful candidates will work within the secondary phase supporting pupils with a range of behaviour and learning needs. Experience of working in a school evironment with special needs pupils in particular, would be an advantage but is not essential as full training will be provided.

Ofsted (2006) describes the school as "outstanding in all areas", the school has an excellent reputation locally and it provides a challenging, productive and happy learning environment. The school has also gained the"Investors in People" standard and therefore places a high priority on professional and career development.

For more information and an application pack, please contact the school office.

Closing Date: Monday 11 May 2009
Interview Date: Thursday 14 May 2009
The school requires a completed application form - no CV's accepted

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

The Folkestone academy

Required for September 2009

TEACHER OF ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

MPS

A specialist teacher of Additional Educational Needs is required to join our successful team, working with students with specific learning difficulties and ASD across the Key Stages both individually and in small groups. This is an exciting time to join the department as we move towards becoming an All Age Academy.

A commitment to the ethos of inclusion is essential. You will have the ability to establish strong working relationships with young people and colleagues and will bring enthusiasm and mew ideas to the classroom to make learning fun and engaging.

Full details and an application form are available on our website **www.folkestoneacademy.com**
Alternatively, telephone Sally Taylor on 01303 842400

Closing date: Monday 18 May at 5pm
Interviews: Friday 22 May

The Folkestone Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check.

The Folkestone Academy, Academy Lane, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5FP • Tel: 01303 842400
Email: admin@folkestoneacademy.com

The Folkestone academy

Required for September 2009

KS2 SPECIALIST TEACHER

Full or Part-time (MPS)

The Academy is embarking on an exciting new journey as we move towards becoming an all-age Academy for ages 4 – 19. For September we are seeking a KS2 teacher to join our successful Foundation Curriculum team. Recently praised by Ofsted, the foundation team work with small classes of 16 students in years 7, 8 & 9 for 50% of the students' timetable in a classroom base equipped using the KS2 model. Foundation teachers deliver English, maths and humanities subjects to one class with the primary aim of raising the ability of students who join us with standards below level 4.

This is an exciting opportunity for a KS2 trained teacher to join our dedicated team of professionals who are committed to caring for and guiding young people and helping them to work towards meeting national levels of expectation in their achievement.

Full details and an application form are available on our website **www.folkestoneacademy.com**
Alternatively, telephone Sally Taylor on 01303 842400

Closing date: Thursday 14 May 2009 at 5pm
Interviews: Monday 18 May

The Folkestone Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check.

The Folkestone Academy, Academy Lane, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5FP • Tel: 01303 842400
Email: admin@folkestoneacademy.com

WALMER SCIENCE COLLEGE
Salisbury Road, Walmer, Deal, Kent, CT14 7QJ
Telephone : 01304 375212 Fax : 01304 380766
e-mail : admin@walmersciencecollege.co.uk
Headteacher : Simon Heaton BSc (Hons), NPQH.

MIXED 11-18 HIGH SCHOOL 789 ON ROLL

REQUIRED FOR 1st SEPTEMBER 2009

TEACHER OF SCIENCE (MPS)

The post would be suitable for either NQTs or more experienced teachers. A comprehensive induction programme will be offered whatever your status.

The successful applicant will:-

- be a creative teacher with the ability to motivate students of all abilities;
- be enthusiastic and energetic;
- have a commitment to raising standards;
- have a commitment to providing a first class learning experience for all our students.

Walmer Science College is a good school with outstanding features (Ofsted 2007)

Walmer Science College is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and the successful applicant will be required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure via the CRB. For an application form and further details, please contact Mrs Windsor at the school.

Closing date : 19th May 2009

We value diversity in our workforce INVESTOR IN PEOPLE Kent County Council

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Career Opportunities

Canterbury College

Canterbury College is an equal opportunities employer

Canterbury College is a Further and Higher Education College in the heart of Kent. Our goal is to be one of the best FE Colleges in England by 2010. We have 9,000 students across 300 courses and enjoy an enviable reputation as a great place to learn. Our brand new £50M Campus is also home to nearly 800 staff and we have some great career opportunities which may be right for you.

Section Manager Cleaning/Security/Public Services/Health & Safety/ Environmental Health **06/122**
37 hrs per week, salary starting £33,858 per annum.

Supply Lecturers (teachers) required in the following areas: **S/PA**
Theatre Stage Craft (Technical & Design)
Scenic Design & Construction
Prop Making
Stage Management
Lighting Design
Costume Design and Construction
Various hours available, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum

Temporary Manager Equine, Animal Care, Veterinary Services and Environmental Conservation **09/04**
37 hrs per week, salary starting at £33,858 per annum. Temporary post to cover maternity leave not to exceed 12 months.

Higher Education Curriculum Development Officer **CDO/HE**
37 hrs per week, salary starting at £33,858 per annum.

The closing date for the above posts is Tuesday 26 May 2009 at 12 noon

For an information pack please visit www.canterburycollege.ac.uk or call the Human Resources Office on 01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone) quoting the above reference.

POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

Staff benefits include:

- ***Pension & Life Assurance Scheme***
- ***Proximity to main bus & train stations***
- ***Close to City Centre***
- ***Sports Hall & Gym***
- ***Generous Holiday Allowance***
- ***Staff Discount Scheme***

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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CLICK
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CALL
01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone)

Demanding, exciting and rewarding!
If this is the type of career you are looking for, then please continue

Personal Assistant

to the Principal & Chief Executive

Circa £30,000 plus final salary pension, generous leave and benefits

MidKent College is moving into an exciting phase in the history of the College with the relocation from the Horsted and City Way campuses to a stunning new £86m new build located at Lower Lines, Chatham in September this year. Combining this move with the recent award of the Public Private Partnership contract for the Royal School of Military Engineering at Brompton Barracks and the planned development of the existing Maidstone campus, it is a hectic time for the College. MidKent College now has an annual turnover of £45m, a staff of over 1,000 and trains around 12,000 students and 3,000 soldiers each year.

The ideal candidate will therefore be joining during a period of significant change with the opportunity to develop your career within this stimulating environment. You will already have direct experience of working for a senior manager and be fully familiar with the demands and rewards of working at this level.

Reporting directly for and supporting the Principal and Chief Executive, you will hold a position of responsibility, developing strong working relationships with the Directors, Senior Leadership Team, Governors and external Stakeholders involved across the MidKent College Group.

Interested: Please forward your CV to ken.pullan@midkent.ac.uk or call him on 07725 128661 (after 12th May) for an informal discussion.

A full Job Description/Person Specification and application can be seen at www.midkent.ac.uk

Closing Date: 25th May 2009

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE · POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE · Action for Business College

MidKent College is an equal opportunity employer

MidKent College

The College is committed to Equal Opportunities and to selection on merit. It welcomes applications from all sections of society. We particularly welcome and encourage applications from under represented groups including black, minority ethnic and disabled people.

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Highways - Districts of Swale, Canterbury, Thanet, Dover, Ashford

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS IN THE DISTRICTS OF SWALE, CANTERBURY, THANET, DOVER & ASHFORD) (50 MPH SPEED LIMIT) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because highway maintenance works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting all traffic from travelling at any speed in excess of 50 mph on Various Roads in the districts of Swale, Canterbury, Thanet, Dover & Ashford as described in column 1 of the Schedule on or after 11 May 2009, as shown in column 3 of the Schedule, or until such works are complete.

THE SCHEDULE

Specified Road	Length of road affected	Programmed Dates
A299 Thanet Way (Swale, Canterbury & Thanet)	Full length from the Brenley Corner junction to the Mount Pleasant roundabout, Minster	Phase 1: 11 May to 5 June 2009 Phase 2: 12 October to 6 November 2009
A28 Canterbury Road, Birchington (Thanet)	From the St Nicholas at Wade roundabout to the existing 40 mph limit prior to the junction with Seamark Road	Phase 1: 8 June to 9 June 2009 Phase 2: 9 November to 10 November 2009
A256 Whitfield Bypass, Whitfield (Dover)	From the junction with the A2 to the Dover Road roundabout	Phase 1: 10 June to 16 June 2009 Phase 2: 11 November to 17 November 2009
Lydden Hill, Lydden (Dover)	From the junction with the A2 to the junction with Swanton Lane	Phase 1: 17 June 2009 Phase 2: 18 November 2009
Romney Marsh Road, Ashford	Norman Road roundabou to Park Farm Estate roundabout	Phase 1: 18 June to 6 June 2009 Phase 2: 23 July to 31 July 2009.
A2042 Bad Munstereifel Road, Ashford	From junction with Romney Marsh Road to 'cloverleaf' junction with A2070	Phase 1: 18 June to 26 June 2009 Phase 2: 23 July to 31 July 2009
A20 Maidstone Road and Fougeres Way, Ashford	Between the junction with Sandyhurst Lane and junction 9 of the M20	Phase 1: 29 June to 30 June 2009 Phase 2: 3 August to 4 August 2009

This Order will come into force on 11 May 2009, will be in operation when the appropriate signs are in place, and will remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months. The order will allow the above-mentioned restrictions to be implemented as and when required for works of a similar nature, at any time for the duration of the order.

Highways - District of Canterbury

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS LEVEL CROSSINGS, CANTERBURY) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of track maintenance works on behalf of Network Rail, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Various Level Crossings, Canterbury, as described in columns 1 & 2 of the Schedule to this Order, from 11 May 2009 onwards, as shown in column 3 of the Schedule. Each closure will be for a distance of 20 metres from the level crossing, and pedestrian access may be affected.

The alternative routes for through traffic will be via as described in column 3 of the Schedule.

SCHEDULE

Specified Road	Alternative routes	Programmed Date
Grove Ferry Hill and Grove Ferry Road, Chislet	Via Grove Ferry Road, Grove Road, Stourmouth Road, Preston Road, The Street, Ramsgate Road, Island Road, Grove Ferry Hill	From 11 May 2009 for 4 nights, between 11.00 pm and 6.00 am, ending Friday 15 May 2009 at 5.00 am. From 1.00 am 19 September 2009 until 4.00 am 21 September 2009
St Dunstan's Street, Canterbury	London Road, Rheims Way and St Peter's Place	2.00 am 17 May 2009 until 5.00 am 18 May 2009
Chartham Station, Station Road, Chartham	A28 Ashford Road, Shalmsford Street and Parish Road	2.00 am 7 June 2009 until 5.00 am 8 June 2009
Broad Oak Road and Shalloak Road, Canterbury Note suspension of 7.5-ton weight limit in Sweechgate and Shalloak Road	Via Broad Oak Road, Vauxhall Road, Sturry Road, Mill Road, Sturry Hill, Herne Bay Road, (for through traffic) Sweechgate and Shalloak Road	From 24 August 2009 for two nights from 11.00 pm until 6.00 am.

This Order will come into force on Monday 11 May 2009, will be in operation when the appropriate signs are erected, and will remain valid for a maximum period of eighteen months. The order will allow the above-mentioned restrictions to be implemented as and when required for works of a similar nature, at any time for the duration of the order.

Highways - Borough of Dartford

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
BROAD LANE, DARTFORD (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Broad Lane, Dartford between its junctions with Hook Green Road and Common Lane.

The Order will become effective on 11th May 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last 5 days between 09:30 and15:30 and commence on 11th May 2009. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Hooks Green Lane, Leyton Cross Road, Oakfield Lane, Common Lane.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate access to carriageway box for the restoration of a BT service.

Highways - District of Dover

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS, DOVER) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because Carriageway Surfacing works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on various roads, Dover from as described in column 1 of the schedule to the order on or after 28 May 2009 for an estimated period of as described in column 3 of the schedule to this order or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via as described in column 2 of the schedule to this order.

The Affected Route	The Alternative Route	Date & Times of Road Closure
Ringwould Road, Kingsdown Pumping Station to Upper Street	Dover Road, Granville Road, Kingsdown Road and Upper Street	28 May - 2 June 2009 (08:00 - 18:00)
Kingsdown Road, Walmer Hawkshill Road to Upper Street	Granville Road, Dover Road, Ringwould Road and Upper Street	29 May - 8 June 2009 (20:00 - 05:00)

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(TOWER HILL, DOVER) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because separation of water supply works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Tower Hill, Dover from the junction with number 1 Tower Hill to the junction with South Road on or after 11 May 2009 for an estimated period of 3 days or until such works are complete. The Order will remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Tower Hill, North Road and South Road.

Highways - Borough of Gravesham

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
PRIESTWOOD ROAD, HARVEL (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst an event is held on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Priestwood Road, Harvel between its junctions with Horns Oak Road and Chandlers Road.

The Order will become effective on 25th May 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to take one week commencing on 26th May 2009. These closures will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Chandlers Road, Dean Lane, Dean Road, Oakenden Lane, Foxenden Lane, Whitehill Road, Horns Oak Road.

The purpose of the Order is to facilitate the installation of a new water supply.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
QUEEN STREET, GRAVESEND (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION AND RESTRICTION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst an event is held on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Queen Street, Gravesend between properties numbered 15-17. This Order will also suspend the one way order on the above road for the duration of the planned works.

The Order will become effective on 25th May 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to take place on 31st May 2009. These closures and restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Parrock Street, Lord Street, Clive Road, Barrack Row, Bath Street, West Street, Crooked Lane, Queen Street.

The purpose of the Order is to facilitate the installation of a new electrical supply.

Highways - District of Shepway

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(STONE STREET, ELMSTED) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because drainage and carriageway works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Stone Street, Elmsted from junction of Curtis Lane to the junction with North Leigh on or after 26 May 2009 for an estimated period of 5 weeks or until such works are complete. The Order will remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months.

The alternative for the closure described in column 1 of the Schedule is described in column 2 of the Schedule:

THE SCHEDULE

Specified Direction	Alternative routes
Southbound traffic via	New Dover Road, A2 Dover Road, A260 Canterbury Road, A260 Spitfire Way, A260 Canterbury Road, A259 Churchill Avenue, A20 Cherry Garden Avenue, Cheriton Road, Cheriton High Street, Cheriton Interchange and A20 Ashford Road. Vehicles permitted to travel on motorways can follow the diversion to A260 Spitfire way and join the A20 at the Roundhill Tunnels junction, continue along to the M20 and exit at junction 11.
Northbound traffic via	A20 Ashford Road, Cheriton Interchange, Cheriton High Street, Cheriton Road, A20 Cherry Garden Avenue, A259 Churchill Avenue, A260 Canterbury Road, A260 Spitfire Way, A260 Canterbury Road, A2 Dover Road and New Dover Road. Vehicles permitted to travel on motorways can join the M20 at junction 11, continue along to the A20 and exit at the Roundhill Tunnels junction then follow the diversion.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(MILL ROAD, HYTHE) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because electrical ducting and cabling works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Mill Road, Hythe from the junction of Station Road to the junction with Seabrook Road on or after 30 May 2009 for an estimated period of 4 weeks or until such works are complete. The Order will remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via A259 East Street and A259 Seabrook Road. Local access only to Mill Road.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(BOUVERIE ROAD WEST, FOLKESTONE) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because construction and crane works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Bouverie Road West, Folkestone from the junction of Trinity Road to the junction with Trinity Gardens on 11 May 2009 for an estimated period of 3 seperate days as described in column 1 of schedule to this order or until such works are complete. The Order will remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Earls Avenue, Sandgate Road and Castle Hill Avenue.

Dates
11 May 2009 for 1 working day.
19 May 2009 for 1 working day.
26 May 2009 for 1 working day.

Highways - Borough of Swale

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(LOVE LANE, MINSTER) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of works related to the construction of new dwellings, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Love Lane, Minster, between the junctions of Wards Hill Road and Scarborough Drive, on or after 26 May 2009 for an estimated period of four weeks or until the works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Wards Hill Road, Lynmouth Drive and Scarborough Drive.

This Order will remain valid for a maximum period of eighteen months and be in operation when the appropriate signs are displayed. The order will allow the above-mentioned restrictions to be implemented as and when required for works of a similar nature, at any time for the duration of the order.

It is anticipated there will be a further four week closure approximately four weeks after this closure ends.

COAST PROTECTION ACT 1949
APPLICATION FOR CONSTRUCTION WORKS CONSENT FOR A ROAD BRIDGE AT MILTON CREEK, SITTINGBOURNE, NORTH KENT

Notice is hereby given that Kent County Council has applied to the Secretary of State for the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs under Section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949, as amended by Section 36 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1988, for a consent to construct a road bridge at Milton Creek, Sittingbourne, North Kent.

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at: Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT

Representations or objections on navigational grounds in respect of the application should be made in writing, giving an address to which correspondence relating to the representation or objection may be sent, to Sara Siddig, Marine Development Control Team, Area 4D, Ergon House, Horseferry Road, London, SW1A 2AL, or alternatively emailed to sara.siddig@mfa.gsi.gov.uk, addressed to Sara Siddig within 28 days of the date of this notice, quoting reference DC8664.

The Secretary of State will pass to the applicant a copy of any objection or representation he receives.

Highways - District of Thanet and Canterbury

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(A299 THANET WAY ST NICHOLAS AT WADE AND A28 CANTERBURY ROAD BIRCHINGTON) (TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because highway improvement works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order on the routes described in column 1 of the Schedule on or after 11 May 2009 for an estimated period of 2 weeks or until such works are complete. The Order will remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months.

The alternative for the closure described in column 1 of the Schedule is described in column 4 of the Schedule:

For further information, please contact Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent Highway Services

THE SCHEDULE

Specified Road	Length of road affected	Dates	Alternative routes
A299 Thanet Way, Herne Bay and St Nicholas at Wade (coast bound)	Temporary Mandatory Speed Restriction of 50mph, 30m from the junction with Brook Lane, Herne Bay to the junction with St Nicholas Roundabout	Between 11 May to 24 May 2009 for 2 weeks	N/A
A299 Thanet Way, St Nicholas at Wade (London bound)	Temporary Mandatory Speed Restriction of 50mph, 750m prior to St Nicholas Roundabout to 100m west of Frost Farm	Between 11 May to 24 May 2009 for 2 weeks	N/A
A28 Canterbury Road Birchington (London bound)	Temporary Mandatory Speed Restriction of 50mph, 750m prior to the junction with St Nicholas Roundabout	Between 11 May to 24 May 2009 for 2 weeks	N/A
A299 Thanet Way, St Nicholas at Wade	Closed from the junction with Chambers Wall to the junction with St Nicholas Roundabout in an easterly direction only	Between 11 May to 24 May 2009 for 2 nights. Works will commence after 21:00hrs until 05:00hrs	Chambers Wall and Potten Street Road
A299 Thanet Way, St Nicholas at Wade	Temporary Mandatory Speed Restriction of 40mph, 400m east of the western junction with Chambers Wall for 150m	Between 11 May to 24 May 2009 or 2 nights. Works will commence after 21:00hrs until 05:00hrs	N/A
A299 Thanet Way, St Nicholas at Wade	Temporary Mandatory Speed Restriction of 30mph, 550m east of the western junction with Chambers Wall to the eastern junction with Chambers Wall	Between 11 May to 24 May 2009 for 2 nights. Works will commence after 21:00hrs until 05:00hrs	N/A

Highways - District of Thanet

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (QUEENS AVENUE, MARGATE) (ONE WAY) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because footway works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order to make Queens Avenue, Margate one way for westbound traffic during night work on or after 11 May 2009 for an estimated period of one week or until such works are complete.

Eastbound traffic will use Grosvenor Gardens, High Street and Ramsgate Road.

This order will come into force on Monday 11 May 2009, will be in operation when the appropriate signs are erected, and will remain valid for a period of eighteen months. The order will allow the above mentioned restrictions to be implemented as and when required for works of a similar nature at any time for the duration of the order.

Highways - Borough of Tonbridge & Malling

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (VARIOUS ROADS, TONBRIDGE AND MALLING)(WAITING RESTRICTIONS AND ON-STREET PARKING) (SNODLAND PARKING PLAN) (AMENDMENT No. 2) ORDER 2009

Notice is hereby given that the KENT COUNTY COUNCIL acting as the local traffic authority and in exercise of its powers under Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 32, 35, 45, 46, 49 and 53 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended, and of all other enabling powers and after consultation with the Chief Officer of Police in accordance with Part III of Schedule 9 to the said Act, proposes to make the above Order. The effect of the Order will be to implement the approved Snodland Local Parking Plan in the following roads:

Birling Road, Bramley Road (to support proposed one-way traffic flows), Brook Lane, Brook Street, Catts Alley, Cemetery Road, Charles Close, Church Field, Clock Tower Mews, Constitution Hill, Dryland Road, East Street, Godden Road, Hammonds Square, High Street, Holborough Road, Hollow Lane, Hook Road, Godden Road, Kent Road, Lakeside, Lucas Road, Malling Road, Mill Street, Nevill Road, Norman Road, Paddlesworth Road, Pout Road, Queens Avenue, Queens Road, Recreation Avenue, Rectory Close, Roberts Road, Rocfort Road, Rookery Hill, Saltings Road, St Benedict Road, St Katherines Lane, The Groves, Thomson Close, Tomlin Close, Waghorn Road, Willowside and Woodlands Avenue

1. The Order proposes the following general items;

a. To revoke unnecessary lengths of single yellow and double yellow lines to provide more roadside parking opportunity.

b. Install new DYL to protect certain bends, junction access and sight lines; promote the free flow of traffic; and prevent obstruction

c. Introduce permitted parking areas with uncontrolled bay markings (no time limits) to make the best use of available roadside parking space in the town centre and identified residential areas

2. The Order also proposes the specific measures at the following sites:

a. Moving the existing dedicated Disabled Persons Parking Bay (DPPB) in the High Street (east) to the High Street end of the Public Car Park and replacing it with short stay waiting

b. Provide an additional DPPB in High Street (west) lay by, near the Chemist.

c. Control obstructive parking around school sites in Malling Road, Roberts Road and St Katherines' Lane.

d. Preserve access and loading facilities for local shops

e. Rationalise short-stay, time-limited, daytime waiting in High Street, Holborough Road, Malling Road and Rocfort Road.

The Order will contain the usual exemptions to enable a vehicle to wait with police permission or for passengers to board or alight, for the loading and unloading of goods, for enabling work to be carried out in or adjacent to the road, for disabled persons and for emergency vehicles.

A copy of the Order together with a map, a copy of the Council's reasons for making the Order, may be inspected during normal office hours at the offices of Tonbridge and Malling Council Offices, Kings Hill, West Malling or Tonbridge Castle, Snodland Town Council Offices, Snodland Library and the Kent County Council Offices, Invicta House, County Hall Maidstone Kent.

If you have any questions concerning the Order or require further information please contact 01732 876222 during normal office hours.

Anyone wishing to support these proposals, or object to them, should write stating reasons, and quoting the name of the Order, to the Director of Planning, Transport and Leisure, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4LZ, by no later than 12.00 NOON on Monday, 1st June, 2009.

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Parking Action Plan

The Snodland Parking Plan is a community built project developed through consultation with local people, Snodland Town Council ,The Snodland Partnership and Snodland Chamber of Commerce

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (B2016 SEVEN MILE LANE, OFFHAM/MEREWORTH & COMP LANE, OFFHAM) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on the B2016 Seven Mile Lane, Offham/ Mereworth between the Wrotham Heath Golf Club entrance to Beech Reservoir and on Comp Lane, Offham from the junction with Seven Mile Lane to Mid Comp Cottages. The order will come into effect on the 7th September 2009 and remain in place for a period of up to eight weeks or until the works are completed. The closure of Comp Lane is to be in position for up to 5 days.

The alternative routes for Seven Mile Lane will be for northbound traffic via the A26 Tonbridge Road, A228 Malling Road, Kings Hill, Ashton Way, A20 London Road and southbound traffic vice versa. The alternative route for Comp Lane will be for westbound traffic via the B2016 Seven Mile Lane, A20 London Road, A25 Maidstone Road, Long Mill Lane, Comp Lane and for eastbound traffic vice versa.

South East Water apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary for the laying of a new water main. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Sam Appleby on 01622 873976.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (FORD LANE, WROTHAM HEATH) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Ford Lane between the M20 Bridge and Wrotham Water Road on or after Wednesday 27th May 2009 for a period of up to 1 day or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the route described above is for northbound traffic via A20 London Road, Trottiscliffe Road, Addington Lane, Ford Lane and for southbound traffic vice versa.

Commhoist Ltd apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary to place a crane in the carriageway to install Vodafone equipment. Should you require any further information regarding these works, their contact is Rebecca O'Brien on 01942 269335.

Highways - Borough of Tonbridge & Malling and District of Sevenoaks

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL VARIOUS ROADS, WROTHAM, STANSTED AND WEST KINGSDOWN (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION AND RESTRICTION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst an event is held on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on various roads as noted below (i) and (ii). This Order will also restrict traffic to not exceeding a speed limit of 30m.p.h. on the roads as noted below (iii) and (iv).

Closure of Stansted Lane between the London Golf Course entrance and its junction with South Ash Lane - One Way Traffic from South Ash Lane towards London Golf Club.

Closure of South Ash Lane from its junction with Stansted Lane to A20 London Road, Wrotham/West Kingsdown - One Way Traffic from A20 London Road towards Stansted Lane.

A20 London Road, West Kingsdown between its junction with South Ash Lane and Crowhurst Lane, West Kingsdown.

Ash Lane/South Ash Lane, Stansted betweenA20 London Road, Wrotham and Pease Hill, Ash.

The Order will become effective on 25th May 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the event is planned to take place between 27th and 31st May 2009 between the hours of 06:30 and 20:30. These closures and speed restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

There are no alternative routes for the routes described above.

The purpose of the Order is to ensure that traffic remain moving whilst the event is being held

Highways - Borough of Tunbridge Wells

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (VARIOUS ROADS IN THE BOROUGH OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC AND WAITING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2008 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL, acting as the local traffic authority and in exercise of its powers under Section 14 of The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended by Section 14 of the Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) Act 1991 and all other enabling powers, hereby intends to the following order prohibiting the use by traffic on the routes described in Column 1 of Schedule 1 hereto.

1. NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road (necessary highway maintenance/excavation in carriageway), that traffic on various roads in Tunbridge Wells in the schedule below, hereto should be prohibited.
2. In exercise of it's aforementioned powers, The Kent County Council hereby intend to make an order to prohibit through traffic on the roads described in Column 1 and 2 of the schedule.

The alternative route for each route is described in Column 3 of the Schedule.

3. The order may be cited as "The Kent County Council (Various Roads in Tunbridge Wells) (Prohibition of Traffic) Temporary Order 2009."

SCHEDULE 1

1. Specified Road	2. Section Affected	3. Diversion Route
Upper Dunstan Road, Tunbridge Wells	Queens Road to Stephens Road	Queens Road, A26 St John's Road, Somerset Road and Stephens Road.
Golford Road, Cranbrook	Tilsden Lane to Benenden Rd 'Castletons Oak' crossroads	Cranbrook Road, Benenden Road, A262 Tenterden Road, A262 Biddenden High Street, A262 Sissinghurst Road, A262 Biddenden Road, A262 Goudhurst Road, A229 Angley Road, Waterloo Road, St Davids Bridge, The Hill and Bakers Cross.
Pearsons Green Road, Paddock Wood	Knowle Road to Churn Lane	Pearsons Green Road, Churn Lane, B2162 Maidstone Road, Yew Tree Green Road, Crook Road, Pixot Hill and Mile Oak Road.
Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood	A228 Maidstone Road to B2017 Badsell Road	A228 Maidstone Road, B2017 Badsell Road and B2160 Maidstone Road.
A26 Pembury Road, Tunbridge Wells	Pembury High Street to A21 roundabout	Old Tonbridge Road, A21 roundabout, Longfield Road, Liptraps Lane, Birken Road, Sandhurst Road and Pembury Road.
A267 Nevill Street/ Frant Road, Tunbridge Wells	A26 Eridge Road to Roedean Road	A267 Frant Road, Roedean Road, Warwick Park. (HGV's) Broadwater Down, A26 Eridge Road and Nevill Street.
Quarry Road, Tunbridge Wells Tunbridge Wells	Upper Grosvenor Road Albion Road	Grosvenor Road, Upper Grosvenor Road, Meadow Road, Goods Station Road, Victoria Road and Camden Road.
Upper Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells	Queens Road to Sandhurst Road	Sandhurst Road, A264 Pembury Road, Calverley Road, Crescent Road, Church Road, London Road, Mount Ephraim, Grosvenor Road and Upper Grosvenor Road.
A26 London Road Tunbridge Wells	Nevill Street to Major York's Roundabout	A26 London Road, Church Road, Mount Ephraim, Bishop[s Down Road, Major York's Road.
A26 Eridge Road, Tunbridge Wells	Major York's Road to Neville Terrace	A26 London Road, A267 Nevill Street, Frant Road, Broadwater Down and A26 Eridge Road
Glassenbury Road, Cranbrook	A262 Goudhurst Road to A229 Hartley Road	A229 Hartley Road, Angley Road, A262 Goudhurst Road and Glassenbury Road.

Advance road works information boards will be placed prior to works commencing on site, giving details as to when the works are scheduled to commence and expected duration.

This order will come into force on Monday 1st June 2009, and will be in operation when the appropriate signs are erected and will remain valid for a period of eighteen months. The order will allow the above mentioned restrictions to be implemented as and when required for works of a similar nature at any time for the duration of the order.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (BEDFORD ROAD, SOUTHBOROUGH) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Bedford Road, Southborough outside 2A on or after Monday 11th May 2009 for a period of up to 2 days or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the route described above is for northbound traffic via Western Road, London Road, Meadow Road, Bedford Road and for southbound traffic vice versa.

South East Water apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary to provide a connection to the mains. Should you require any further information regarding these works, their contact is Richard Rogers of Morgan Est on 01825 745727.

For further information, please contact Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent Highway Services

TRANSPORT LIFTING CONTRACTS LIMITED

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of creditors of the above-named Company will be held at 141 Parrock Street, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1EY, on 14 May 2009, at 11.00 am for the purposes mentioned in Sections 100 and 101 of the said Act. A list of names and addresses of the Company's creditors will be available for inspection free of charge at 141 Parrock Street, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1EY, on 12 May 2009 and 15 May 2009, the two business days before the date of the meeting.

Dated 5 May 2009
By Order of the Board
Barry Knapp, Director

The Insolvency Act 1986
GREENFIELDS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Company Number 06507198

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of creditors of the above company will be held at Granville House, 49 The Mall, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8JW on 15 May 2009 at 11.00 am for the purposes provided for in Sections 99 and 101 of the Act.

Creditors wishing to vote at the meeting must lodge their proxy, together with a statement of claim, at the offices of Augusta Kent Limited, Granville House, 49 The Mall, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8JW not later than 12.00 noon on 14 May 2009. The proxy form and statement may be posted or sent by fax to 01795 538868. Secured creditors may only vote for the balance of the debt, which will not be recovered by enforcement of the security, unless right to enforce is waived. A list of the names and addresses of the Company's creditors will be available for inspection free of charge at the offices of Augusta Kent Limited, Granville House, 49 The Mall, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8JW on 13 May 2009 and 14 May 2009 between the hours of 10.00 am and 4.00 pm.

If no liquidation committee is formed, a resolution may be taken specifying the terms on which the liquidator is to be remunerated. The meeting will receive information about, or be called upon to approve, the costs of preparing the statement of affairs and convening the meeting.

Dated this 17 April 2009
Claire Pitts, Director

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KENT POLICE AUTHORITY
AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2008/9

Any interested person may inspect and copy the accounts and related documents between 10am and 4pm, from Wednesday 3 June to Thursday 2 July 2009 at Kent Police Headquarters, Sutton Road, Maidstone, Kent ME15 9BZ. Telephone 01622 652761.

Any Elector for the areas of the Kent County Council and Medway Council may request a meeting with the auditor to question him about the accounts or make an objection on any matter in respect of which the auditor could take action under the Audit Commission Act 1998 (ie an unlawful item of account; failure to bring a sum into account; a loss or deficiency caused by wilful misconduct) or could make a report.

No objection may be made unless the auditor has previously received written notice of the proposed objection and the grounds. A copy of such notice may be sent to me at the address below.

Requests to meet the auditor to ask questions or make objections in relation to the accounts should be sent to: Darren Wells, Appointed Auditor, Audit Commission, 16 South Park, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1SN.

The auditors will be available on Friday 3 July 2009 at Kent Police Headquarters at 10am.

David Lewis
Treasurer, Kent Police Authority
Gail House, Lower Stone Street
Maidstone, Kent ME15 6NB

NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO VARY A PREMISES LICENSE UNDER SECTION 34 OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003

Notice is hereby given that AJ Khan Ltd in respect of the premises known as Source Of Sound, 2-12 Avebury Avenue, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1TF applied to Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council for a variation of a Premises License. The proposed variation is to increase capacity by means of installing an external fire escape of steel construction. We have also applied to remove the condition that previously did not allow patrons less than 18 years of age to be admitted on nights when alcohol was not for sale. There is no application to vary licensable activities.

Any representations by an interested party or responsible authority regarding the above mentioned application must be received in writing by The Licensing Department, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, Gibson Building, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4LZ no later than 5th June 2008 stating the grounds for objection.

The register of Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council and the record of the application may be inspected at the address of the council, given above, during normal business hours or on the council's website - www.tmbc.gov.uk

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. The maximum fine for which a person is liable on summary conviction for the offence is £5,000

AJ Khan Ltd, Home Farm London Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 0UH.

NOTICE OF CONFIRMATION OF PUBLIC PATH ORDER
HIGHWAYS ACT 1980
TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
(FOOTPATH MR144 (PART) KINGS HILL)
PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION ORDER 2009

On 8 May 2009 Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council confirmed the above Order made under section 119 of the Highways Act 1980.

The effect of the Order as confirmed, is to divert the part of public footpath MR144 which commences at NGR TQ 6784 5631 (point A on the Order map) and passes in a generally east south-easterly direction for approximately 139 metres to NGR TQ 6797 5630 (point F on the Order map) to a new length of Public Footpath MR144 with a width of 2 metres which commences at the aforementioned point A and runs in a generally north easterly direction for approximately 14 metres to NGR TQ 6785 5632 (point B on the Order Map), thence in a generally easterly direction for approximately 55 metres to NGR TQ 6790 5633 (point C on the Order Map), thence in a generally easterly direction for approximately 5 metres to NGR TQ 6790 5634 (point D on the Order Map), thence in a generally south easterly direction for 76 metres to NGR TQ 6797 5630 (point E on the Order Map)and thence in a generally southerly direction for 4 metres to NGR TQ 6797 5630 (point F on the Order Map)

A copy of the Order as confirmed and the Order Plan have been placed and may be seen free of charge at the Council Offices, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4LZ, during normal opening hours. Copies of the Order and Plan may be purchased by arrangement with the Council.

The Order comes into force on 5 June 2009, but if any person aggrieved by the Order wants to question its validity, or that of any provision contained in it, on the grounds that it is not within the powers of the Highways Act 1980, as amended, or any regulation made under the Act has not been complied with in relation to the Order, he or she may under paragraph 2 of Schedule 2 to the Act as applied by paragraph 5 of Schedule 6 to the Act, within 6 weeks from 8 May 2009, make an application to the High Court.

DAVID HUGHES
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
8 May 2009

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS – NOTICES OF APPLICATIONS

The following applications have been submitted to the Council and are being advertised for the reason(s) given in each case.

TM/09/00233/FL – 1 High Street East Malling West Malling Kent ME19 6AJ – Mr Paul Wakenell is applying for conversion of existing residential accommodation on first and second floor to create two self-contained apartments with amenity space, parking and the erection of a terrace of three one bedroom dwellings with amenity space, parking, access and staff parking for existing restaurant. Reason: LB CA

TM/09/00860/FL – Mount Mead Ford Lane Trottiscliffe West Malling Kent ME19 5DP – Mr John Barton is applying for first floor extension to side, single storey and double storey rear extension, extension over front porch and new gated entrance. Reason: HA HH

TM/09/00475/LB – 67 High Street West Malling Kent ME19 6NA – Mr Diljit Brar is applying for Listed Building Application: Replacement shop front. Reason: LB CA

TM/09/00904/FL – 32 Medway Court Aylesford Kent ME20 7QN – Mr Banahan is applying for rear conservatory. Reason: PROW HH

TM/09/00930/LB – 27 Water Lane West Malling Kent ME19 6HH – Pilsdon And Ewell Community are applying for Listed Building Application: Amended alteration to create WC/shower (part revision to TM/05/02828/LB (entrance porch; pathway/retaining wall to cloisters; roof alteration to create WC/shower; kitchen/utility area; works for disabled access). Reason: CA LB

TM/09/00676/LB – Highlands House 121 Willow Wents Mereworth Maidstone Kent ME18 5NF – Mr And Mrs J Wardell are applying for Listed Building Application: Proposed internal and external alterations including partial demolition of internal walls, new window and door openings, single storey rear extension, covered link and conversion of outbuildings. Reason: LB

TM/09/00795/FL – Graylings Trottiscliffe Road Addington West Malling Kent ME19 5AZ – Mr Michael Brown is applying for single storey side extension and extension at first floor over existing garage. Reason: CA HH

TM/09/00800/FL – Weald Granary Seven Mile Lane Mereworth Maidstone Kent ME18 5PZ – Weald Granary Ltd are applying for erection of 2no. 18 metre diameter silos and flatstore together with the raising of 27no. existing silos. Reason: DEPART

TM/09/00866/FL – Stone Cottage St Marys Road Wrotham Sevenoaks Kent TN15 7AP – Mr And Mrs Stephen Biggs are applying for two storey extension onto side and rear of original cottage to accommodate re-positioned staircase, new kitchen, cloakroom, study, family room and first floor master bedroom with ensuite. Reason: CA

Reasons for the case being publicised:

LB	Application relates to/affects a Listed Building or its setting
CA	Application is within/affects a Conservation Area
MD	Application is a Major Development
PROW	Application affects a Public Right of Way
EIA	Application is subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment
DEPART	Application does not accord with the Development Plan
GPI	Application is of general Public Interest
TEL	Telecommunications development on a site of 1ha or more
HA	Site is over 1ha.
HH	Householder application - As this is a householder application, in the event of an appeal against a refusal of planning permission, which is to be dealt with on the basis of representations in writing, any representations made about this application will be sent to the Secretary of State, and there will be no further opportunity to comment at appeal stage.

These applications are displayed on our website www.tmbc.gov.uk – click on the button "Do It Online" and follow the instructions for "Planning Applications" online. You can submit your comments by emailing to planning.applications@tmbc.gov.uk (please quote the application number by the date set out below). Please note that we will publish a copy of any representations received on the Council's website, including your name and address.

Copies of applications listed may be seen during office hours (8.30 am and 5.00 pm Monday to Friday). Any applications within Hadlow, Hildenborough and Tonbridge are available at Tonbridge Castle, Tonbridge. Other applications are available at the office of the Director of Planning, Transport & Leisure, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4LZ. Any representations should be made in writing quoting the application number by 31 May 2009.

David Hughes
Chief Executive
10 May 2009

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
NOTICE UNDER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 SECTION 123(2A)

LAND AT WINTERFIELD ESTATE EAST MALLING

Notice is hereby given that Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council intends to dispose of an area of land for the construction of a footpath link, from the Winterfield Estate East Malling to the A20 London Road (as identified on the plans which are available for inspection at Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council offices at the address below) which consists of part of an open space.

Objections to the intended disposal of land must be made in writing and addressed to:

Katie Iggulden (BSC HONS) MRICS
Estates Services Manager, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill,
West Malling, Kent, ME19 4LZ

By no later than 1 June 2009
Dated the 3 day of May 2009

DAVID HUGHES
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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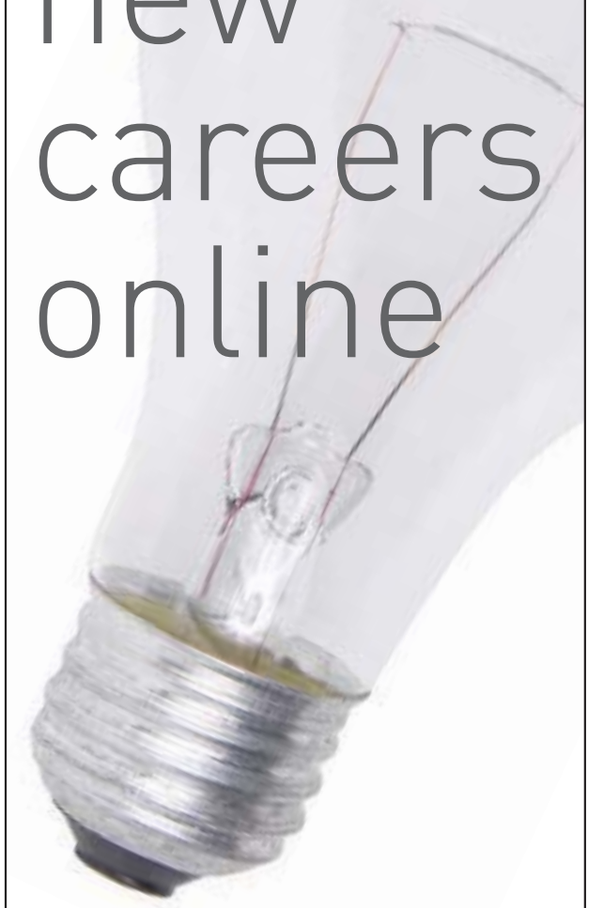

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Vauxhall offers double reprieve

FirstDrive by STEVELOADER

Vauxhall **Insignia Sports Tourer**

VAUXHALL'S new Insignia Sports Tourer could rubbish two death notices – those of the estate car and the petrol engine.

The GM (General Motors) brand – currently sweating over an audacious takeover by Fiat and Chrysler – has predicted a 15 per cent slice of overall Insignia sales for the newcomer.

But this sounds like false modesty for this elegant load-lugger, while volumes for this and the overall Insignia line-up might also benefit hugely from a new engine option – a petrol version worth noting as much as a diesel.

Acceleration

For the all-new turbocharged 180PS (178bhp) 1.6-litre unit is typical of a new breed of petrol powertrains fighting back against diesels, which dominate the new car market currently.

It certainly makes nonsense of the normally-aspirated 1.8-litre petrol unit also offered on the Insignia: both are comparable on CO2 emissions (186/7g/km) and will average around 35mpg, but the Turbo model leaves the 1.8 in the dust for acceleration with a 0-60mph in 8.7 seconds against 11.7.

It also delivers this muscle impressively. It sounds gruff when given the stick, but so would most diesel rivals in this class, and the Sports Tourer feels refined generally.

All of which should make a few would-be diesel Insignia buyers or user-choosers ask: do I go for the cheaper fuel and better acceleration over the superior economy of a diesel, and would I cover enough miles to offset the higher upfront cost of the diesel engine?

Sort that conundrum out and it is much easier to make your mind up about the Sports Tourer itself: it is a quantum leap from the old Vectra equivalent.

The Vectra was a serious if rather funereal load lugger, but could never pretend to be executive class like its successor and volumes were probably cannibalised by Vauxhall's own capacious Zafira MPV.

Its replacement shows that GM recognises that estate buyers now want style and prestige as well as practicality.

The Sports Tourer actually outdoes its predecessor slightly for boot space, with 540 litres against 530 in the old car. However, the boot is on the other foot (sorry) when the rear seats are folded – the Insignia offers 1,530 litres versus the Vectra's 1,850.

But that is still a lot, especially for such a good-looking 'wagon' as this with official prices starting at £18,450.

Most buyers will want the sporty looking SRi trim though, starting at £21,000. It really looks the part and comes with the tauter Sport chassis/suspension setting as standard.

I tended to prefer this set-up during test drives of various models; there seems very little compromise on ride quality against the Comfort package found on S, Exclusiv, SE and Elite models.

That said, both packages feel suited to this big-yet-elegant car and would-be drivers risk a headache making up their mind on model and spec.

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Best scrappage deals Page 51

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08 58 NISSAN NOTE ACENTA 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR SILVER 1800 MILES.....£9995
08 58 NISSAN NOTE ACENTA 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR SILVER 3000 MILES.....£9995
08 58 NEW YARIS SR AUTO PAS AIR/C 5DR CHILLI RED 1600 MILES.....£10495
08 58 RENAULT MODUS 1-6 DYNAMIQUE AUTO PAS AIR MERCURY 1000M.....£9995
08 58 RENAULT CLIO 1-6 EXPRESSION 3DR AUTO PAS 750 MILES.....£9995
08 08 NEW ZAFIRA 1-8 LIFE AUTO PAS AIR/C TURQUOISE 4000 MILES.....£9995
08 08 VW POLO 1-4 MATCH 6 SPEED AUTO 5DR AIR BLACK 1000 MILES.....£9995
08 08 VW POLO 1-4 MATCH 6 SPEED AUTO 5DR AIR BLACK 5000 MILES.....£9995
08 08 MICRA ACCENTA PLUS 5 DOOR AUTO BLUE PAS AIR/C 2000 MILES.....£8995
08 08 MICRA ACCENTA PLUS 5 DOOR AUTO BLACK PAS AIR/C 1900 MILES.....£8995
08 08 FOCUS 1-6 TITANIUM AUTO PAS 5 DR ESTATE SILVER 4000MILES.....£12995
08 08 NEW FOCUS 2-0 TITANIUM AUTO PAS 5 DOOR BLACK 5000MILES.....£12995
08 08 ASTRA 1-8 CLUB AUTO PAS AIR/C 5DOOR STAR BLACK 6000 MILES.....£8495
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08 08 HONDA JAZZ 1-4 SE AUTO PAS AIR/C MET GREY 1800 MILES..... £10995
08 08 PEUGEOT 207 SE PREMIUM 1-6 AUTO PAS 5DR AIR/C BLACK 999MLS.....£10995
08 08 PEUGEOT 207 SPORT 1-6 AUTO PAS 5DR AIR/C BLACK 2000 MILES.....£9995
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08 57 NEW FOCUS 1-6 STYLE AUTO PAS 5 DR ESTATE BLUE 10000MILES.....£9995

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08 08 PEUGEOT 207 SPORT CC 1-6 AUTO CABRIOLET SILVER 2000MILES.....£12495
07 57 MICRA 1-6 CONVERTIBLE CC ACENTA AUTO PAS BLUE 4000 MILES.....£10995
07 07 MEGANE PRIVILEGE 1-6 CONVERTIBLE AUTO PAS BLACK 10000M.....£10995
06 56 HYUNDAI 2-0 COUPE SE 3DR AUTO PAS AIR SILVER 7000 MILES.....£8995
06 56 MICRA CONVERTIBLE SPORT AUTO AIR/C BLADE SILVER 16000MILES.....£9995
06 06 MEGANE DYNAMIQUE1-6 CONVERTIBLE AUTO GREY 10000 MILES.....£8995
05 55 MERCEDES 200 CLK KOMPRESSOR AUTO SILVER 15000 MILES.....£15995

FUSION & FIESTA

07 57 FIESTA 1-6 STYLE CLIMATE 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR/C 350 MILES.....£7995
05 05 FUSION 2 1-6 AUTO PAS 5 DR PANTHER BLACK 20000 MILES.....£5495
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06 06 FOCUS 1-6 GHIA AUTO PAS 4DOOR ALLOYS SEA GREY 14000 MILES.....£6995
06 06 FOCUS 1-6 GHIA AUTO PAS 4DOOR ALLOYS TONIC 14000 MILES.....£6995
06 06 FOCUS 1-6 GHIA AUTO PAS ESTATE ALLOYS BLUE 14000 MILES..... £7995
06 55 FOCUS 1-6 GHIA AUTO PAS 4DOOR ALLOYS TONIC BLUE 17000 MILES.....£6495
05 55 FOCUS 1-6 ZETEC CLIMATE AUTO PAS AIR/C ALLOYS BLUE 13000MLS.....£6495
04 53 FOCUS 1-6 LX 5DR AUTO PAS ESTATE CAR SILVER 26000 MILES.....£4995

CORSA

07 57 NEW CORSA 1-4 CLUB AUTO PAS AIR/C STAR SILVER 7000 MILES.....£8995
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04 54 KIA PICANTO 1-1 LX AUTO PAS AIR/C MET BLUE 35000 MILES.....£3995

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07 57 HONDA CIVIC 1-4 SE AUTO PAS AIR/C CHAMPAGNE 7000 MILES.....£10995
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02 52 HONDA JAZZ 1-4 SE AUTO PAS AIR/C ALLOYS BLUE 55000 MILES.....£4995

HYUNDAI

06 56 HYUNDAI MATRIX 1-6 GSI PAS AIR/C AUTO BLACK 16000 MILES.....£5995
06 06 HYUNDAI MATRIX 18 CDX PAS AIR AUTO SHIMMERBLUE15000MILES.....£6995
06 06 HYUNDAI MATRIX 16 GSI PAS AIR AUTO SHIMMER BLUE10000 MILES.....£5495
06 06 HYUNDAI MATRIX 1-6 GSI PAS AIR AUTO MET GREEN 10000 MILES.....£5495
06 55 HYUNDAI MATRIX 16 GSI PAS AIR AUTO SHIMMER BLUE20000 MILES.....£4995
01 Y HYUNDAI AMICA 1-0 S AUTO PAS RED 1 OWNER 29000 MILES.....£2695

TOYOTA

08 57 TOYOTA AURIS TR 5DR AUTO PAS AIR ALLOYS SILVER 5000 MILES.....£10995
06 56 AVENSIS T3-X 1-8 AUTO PAS ALLOYS 5DR CARLO BLUE 9000 MILES.....£9995
06 06 NEW YARIS 1-3 T SPIRIT 3 DR AUTO PAS AIR SILVER 8000 MILES.....£7995
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05 05 YARIS VERSO T SPIRIT AUTO PAS AIR ALLOYS GREEN 23000MILES.....£6995
04 54 YARIS VERSO T SPIRIT AUTO PAS AIR ALLOYS BLACK 3000MILES.....£6995
05 54 YARIS 1-3 T SPIRIT 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR ALLOYS SILVER 6000 MILES.....£7995
03 03 YARIS 1-3 GLS 3 DR AUTO PAS CARLO BLUE SUNROOF 24000 MILES.....£4995
00 W RAV-4 REEBOK LTD EDITION 5DR AUTO PAS SUNROOF 74000 MILES.....£3995

NISSAN

07 57 NISSAN NOTE TEKNA 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR BLUE 1500 MILES..... £9995
07 07 NISSAN NOTE 1-6 SE 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR/C SILVER 1400 MILES.....£8995
06 56 NISSAN NOTE 1-6 SE 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR/C DARK BLUE 15000 MILES.....£7995
06 06 NISSAN NOTE 1-6 SE 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR/C YELLOW 15000 MILES.....£6995
06 06 NISSAN NOTE 1-6 SE 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR/C CAFFE LATTE 32000MILES.....£5995
06 06 NISSAN MICRA 1-2 SE 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR/C SILVER 22000 MILES.....£6495
06 06 NISSAN MICRA 1-2 SE 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR/C RED 21000 MILES.....£6495
03 03 NISSAN ALMERA 1-8 S AUTO PAS 5DR SILVER 27000 MILES.....£3995
02 02 NISSAN MICRA 1-0 S 5 DR AUTO PAS SILVER MOSS 21000 MILES.....£3695

MG ROVER

03 03 ROVER 45 IMPRESSION AUTO PAS AIR/C NIGHTFIRE RED 43000 MILES ..£3495
01 51 ROVER 45 CLUB AUTO PAS AIR/C NIGHTFIRE RED 35000 MILES.....£2995

CHEVROLET

08 57 CHEVROLETMATIZ 8-0 SE AUTO PAS BLUE 5DR 13000 MILES.....£5695
08 57 CHEVROLET LACETTI 1-6 SX AUTO AIR/C PAS BLACK 5DR 10000MILES...£6495
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07 07 CHEVROLET TACUMA 2-0 CDX AUTO PAS AIR MET BLUE 4000 MILES.....£4995
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07 07 VW POLO 1-4 S 5DR AUTO PAS AIR/C SILVER 12000 MILES.....£8495
06 06 VW GOLF 1-6 S 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR/C SILVER 16000 MILES.....£9995
04 04 VW LUPO 1-4 E 3DR AUTO PAS SILVER JUST 4000 MILES.....£5495
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06 56 FOCUS 1-6 LX 5 DR AUTO PASAIR/C TANGO RED 14000 MILES.....£7495
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Used Cars

AGILA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
04	54	Agila Design	1.2	5	Lilac	28,500	4,195

ASTRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
01	Y*	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Star silver	76,000	2,995
02	02*	Astra Club Auto	1.6	5	Mirage	51,000	3,495
06	06	Astra Sport Twin top	1.8	2	Ultra blue	20,100	9,495
06	56	Astra Elite CDTi	1.9	5	Ultra blue	37,950	8,995
07	07	Astra Sri TBO	1.6	5	Black sapphire	14,600	8,995
07	07	Astra Design Sports	1.6	3	Power red	26,340	8,995
07	57	Astra Club CDTi Est	1.3D	5	Panacotta	8,275	9,495
08	08	Astra Breeze Sports hatch	1.4	3	Star silver	2,110	9,495
08	58	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Green spirit	3,725	11,495
08	58	Astra Club CDTi Estate	1.7D	5	Technical grey	14,450	10,995
08	58	Astra Sri Sports hatch	1.6	3	Silver lightening	6,650	10,995
08	58	Astra Breeze	1.4	5	Black sapphire	4,600	9,995
08	58	Astra Breeze Sports hatch	1.4	3	Black sapphire	3,100	10,795
08	58	Astra Exclusiv T/T	1.8	2	Panacotta		15995
08	58	Astra Club CDTi Estate	1.7D	5	Technical grey		11995

CORSA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
06	06	Corsa Sxi A/c	1.2	5	Black sapphire	37,950	6,295
07	07	New Corsa Design	1.2	3	Air blue	40,670	7,995
08	08	New Corsa Breeze CDTi	1.3D	3	Star silver	1,880	9,195
08	08	New Corsa Sxi A/c	1.2	5	Star silver	3,265	9,995
08	08	New Corsa Club A/c	1.2	5	Silver lightening	5,550	8,995
08	08	New Corsa Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Metro blue	5,200	10,795
08	08	New Corsa Breeze CDTi	1.3D	3	Star silver	5,150	8,995
08	58	New Corsa Sxi CDTi	1.3D	3	Star silver	4,200	9,995
08	58	New Corsa Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Metro blue	5,770	10,995
08	58	New Corsa Sxi A/c	1.4	3	Star silver	5,100	9,695
08	58	New Corsa Design	1.2	3	Star silver	4,640	9,495
08	58	New Corsa Sxi A/c	1.2	3	Silver lightening	3,675	9,495
08	58	New Corsa Club CDTi	1.3D	5	Star silver	3,325	10,695
08	58	New Corsa Breeze CDTi	1.3D	3	Star silver	4,380	9,995
08	58	New Corsa Design CDTi	1.3D	3	Metro blue	6,100	10,295
08	58	Corsa Club MTA	1.2	3	Silver lightening		8,995
08	58	Corsa Sxi A/c	1.4	5	Silver lightening		9,995
08	58	Corsa Club Auto	1.4	5	Ultra blue		9995

MERIVA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
06	56	Meriva Breeze	1.6	5	Star silver	22,000	6,495
08	58	Meriva Design Ex pack	1.8	5	Air blue	2,375	11495
08	58	Meriva CDTi Breeze Plus	1.3	5	Black sapphire	10,930	11495

VECTRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
08	57	Vectra CDTi Exclusive Auto	1.9D	5	Ultra blue	5,870	10,995
08	58	Vectra Elite CDTi (150ps)	1.9D	5	Panacotta	7,050	14995
08	58	Vectra Exclusiv CDTi (150ps)	1.9D	5	Panacotta		11495
08	58	Vectra Exclusive CDTi (150ps)	1.9D	5	Black sapphire		11495

ZAFIRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
05	05	Zafira Life	1.8	5	Ultra blue	38,250	5,995
08	58	Zafira Breeze CDTi Plus	1.9D	5	Metro blue	12,600	13995

NON VAUXHALL

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
00	519*	Ford Focus Ghia	2.0	5	Silver	32,700	2,995
04	54*	Fiesta Lx	1.2	5	Red	27,100	4,695
04	54*	Kia Picanto	1.1	5	Blue	42,900	3,295
06	56*	Hyundai Coupe Atlantic	2.0	2	Silver	17200	7,995

DUE SOON

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
05	55	Corsa Sxi E/T	1.3	3	Black	50,000	4,995
07	57	Astra VXR	2.0	3	Power red	16,500	13,995
08	57	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.6	3	Black sapphire	8,000	9,995
08	08	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.6	3	Ultra blue	9,000	10,995
08	08	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.6	3	Black sapphire	16,000	9,995
04	04	Vectra Sri Auto	2.2	5	Star silver	48,000	4,995
04	54	Tigra Sport	1.8	2	Star silver	26,000	6,995

Commercial Vehicles

ASTRAVAN

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
08	08	Astravan SE	1.9D		Star silver	5,760	£10995+VAT
08	08	Astravan Club	1.7D		White	7,000	£8,995+VAT
08	08	Astravan Club CDTi	1.7D	5	White		8995
08	08	Astravan Club CDTi	1.7D	5	White		8995

COMBO

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
07	07	Combo	1.3D		White	8,700	7,995+VAT
08	08	Combo	1.3D		Silver	1,218	7,995+VAT
08	08	Combo	1.3D CDTi		White	19,500	6995+VAT
08	08	Combo	1.3D CDTi		White	4,250	7,995+VAT
08	08	Combo CDTi	1.3D	5	White		7995
08	58	Combo CDTi	1.7D	5	White		8495
07	57	Combo	1.3 CDTi		White	Delivery	7,495+VAT

CORSA VAN

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
08	08	Corsa van Sportive CDTi	1.3D	3	Star silver		7995
08	58	Corsavan	1.3 CDTi		White	Delivery	6,995+VAT

MOVANO

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
06	56	Movano	2.5 CDTi LWB		Silver	19,700	9,995+VAT
07	57	Movano	2.50CDTi		White	10,300	12,995+VAT
08	08	Movano	2.5CDTI		White	11,050	11,995+VAT
08	08	Movano	2.5D		White	6,460	13,995+VAT
08	58	Movano MWB H/R	2.5	5	White		13995

VIVARO

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
5	55*	Vivaro	1.9D		Red	57,500	8,995+VAT
07	57	Vivaro	1.9 CDTi		White	12,100	9,495+VAT
08	08	Vivaro	2.0 CDTI		White	5,050	10,995+VAT
08	08	Vivaro	2.0CDTI		White	16,050	9,795+VAT
08	08	Vivaro	2.5CDTI		Star silver	3,190	15,995+VAT
08	08	Vivaro SWB CDTi	2.0D	5	White		10995
08	08	Vivaro SWB CDTi	2.0D	5	White		10995
08	08	Vivaro SWB CDTi	2.0D	5	White		10995
08	58	Vivaro SWB CDTi	2.0D	5	Ink Blue		11995
08	58	Vivaro Sportive CDTi	2.0D	5	Star silver		14995
08	08	Vivaro	2.0CDTi		White	Delivery	10,295+VAT.
08	08	Vivaro	2.0CDTI		Black	Delivery	11,495+VAT
08	58	Vivaro	2.0CDTI		Black	Delivery	11,995+VAT
08	58	Vivaro	2.0CDTI		Black	Delivery	13,995+VAT
08	58	Vivaro	2.0CDTI		Silver	Delivery	13,995+VAT
08	58	Vivaro	2.0CDTI		Ink Blue	Delivery	11,995+VAT

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FIRST GEAR

Compiled by Steve Loader

Verso Mark III has Zafira in its sights

VAUXHALL has a powerful rival to the midi-MPV crown worn by its Zafira seven-seater.

It comes from Toyota's third generation Verso, launched this month with much-improved looks and more luggage space.

The Verso already had the same seven-up capacity and fold-flat rear seats as the Vauxhall, but now benefits from Toyota's new Optimal Drive powertrains delivering more performance yet managing lower emissions and better fuel economy.

The three trim grades – T2, TR and T Spirit – are priced from £16,750.

T Spirit flagships gain premium features such as climate control, automatic windscreen wipers and headlights, cruise control, 17-inch alloys and an auto-dimming rear-view mirror with integrated rear parking camera – the logical place for such an accessory.

Overall Verso options include a panoramic sunroof, leather upholstery and two sat nav systems.

Sporting Porsche plans hybrid option

PORSCHE has followed up the launch of a diesel version of its big-selling Cayenne 4x4 SUV with news of a petrol-electric hybrid version due next year.

The sporting brand has also reminded us that founder Ferdinand Porsche co-created a hybrid vehicle as early as 1900, using a 15bhp four-cylinder engine connected directly to an 80-volt dynamo.

For now though, a 3.0-litre V6 VW diesel – made available by Porsche's major stake in the German volume car brand – is expected to help the Cayenne 'green' its image in the face of recession and emissions fears.

Priced from £39,404, the newcomer can average around 30mpg with CO2 emissions of 244g/km.

Citroën surefooted in unsteady times

FOR motorists most wrong-footed by recession, Citroën reckons it has a "surefooted response" – the Nemo Multispace.

This 60+mpg and sub ten grand family recession-buster is a joint project with Fiat that has already produced the largely similar Fiat Qubo.

Along with 119g/km CO2 emissions incurring just £35/year in road tax and 2,500 litres of load space, the car comes with a further sweetener: would-be customers can part-exchange their pre-2000 registered car with Citroën's own £2,000 'Scrappage Incentive'.

They could then drive away a new Nemo for just £7,995.

There is just the choice of a 1.4-litre petrol or diesel engine and one trim level, though this includes remote central locking, electric windows, power steering, split rear seats, four airbags and even 'guide me home' lights.

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by STEVELOADER

Choose carefully for the best in scrappage deals

REACTION to the Government's £2,000 grant aid towards a new car in return for scrapping an old one has been lukewarm.

Amidst the gloom and doom of a recession, those forced to run a banger are hardly likely to stump up cash for a new motor, with or without the two grand sweetener.

Would-be buyers with market savvy also know that discounts on most new cars have been part of the trade for some time – irrespective of the scrappage scheme, and the scope for further savings is now higher as dealers are stretched on the recession rack.

The motor industry and the trade were also dismayed privately by the Government's sleight of hand in using a '£2,000 giveaway' headline to disguise the fact that the Treasury actually donates just half of that cash – the remaining £1,000 comes from the carmaker.

Nonetheless, carmakers and some consumers cannot afford to look a gift horse in the mouth and there are some good scrappage grant offers around if you pick carefully.

The key is to identify where discounts are hard to get. For instance, it would normally be impossible to get £2,000 off a city car or supermini, as dealer profit margins are just a few hundred quid. On top of the grant, you also take the fight to the recession by saving money on fuel and road tax and help cut CO2 emissions.

A good example here would be Hyundai's i10 city car and i20 supermini, both good value even before the £2,000 grant and they also come with Hyundai's universal five-year warranty.

The £2,000 is also worth having if you use it to buy a desirable and slow depreciating model that would not normally be discounted, such as a Mini or BMW.

◀DISCOUNTS: Ford has recognised that the scrappage grant can be used as a start point for stunning discounts of up to £5,000 on its range, which includes the UK No1 seller, the Focus

▲SPORTY: Alfa Romeo has turned the clock back to 1989 – the last time UK buyers could have an Alfa for less than £9,000. Thanks to the scrappage grant they can now get a sporty MiTo supermini – one of the hottest properties on the new car market – for £8,995

◀ SAVINGS: Fiat has added extra savings to its scrappage deals. Buyers can shave £2,655 off a Grand Punto supermini, for instance, and the Italian marque's versatile and economical five-door Panda city car (pictured) can be bought for as little as £4,995

◀VALUE: Minis hold their value better than any other volume car and the icon can now be bought through the scrappage scheme, not that we can promise this specc'd up Mini One Graphite (£13,075) special edition will be on the table

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VAUXHALL

Official Government Test Environmental Data - Fuel Consumption Figures mpg (litres/100km): Vauxhall Range: urban 12.7 (22.3) - 51.4 (5.5), extra-urban 25.4 (11.1) - 74.3 (3.8), combined 18.6 (15.2) - 62.8 (4.5), CO2 Emissions 119 - 364 g/km.

Models shown may have optional extras available at an additional cost. *Recycling Allowance is available on selected engines and applies to the trade in and agreement to dispose of one vehicle only. To qualify for this offer, a customer must purchase one of the eligible models, trade in a vehicle and agree to dispose of the vehicle. The trade in vehicle must have been registered in the name of the customer prior to 30.09.08. Vehicle must be able to be driven on the highway. The customer must supply a vehicle registration document (V5C) and a valid MOT certificate to the retailer for the trade in vehicle. Vauxhall will ensure the vehicle is disposed of under the end of life vehicle directive and a certificate of destruction will be held by the retailer. If the customer agrees to dispose of the vehicle a total of £1000 (£500 on eligible Agila models) (inc. VAT) will be paid towards the purchase of a new eligible model irrespective of the current market value of their vehicle. For more details on this offer and the eligible models go to or visit your local retailer. On the road prices include number plates, delivery, Vehicle Excise Duty, first registration fee and VAT. Offers are available for registrations between 03.04.09 and 02.07.09 subject to availability and are available to private individuals and small businesses 1-24 (purchase only). Savings shown are against list price at time of publication, for details refer to Vauxhall's April 2009 price guide edition 1. All other sales categories are excluded; cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer except Recycling Allowance offer where model and engine is eligible. Offers may not apply to all retailer stocks. UK-supplied vehicles only. **Terms and conditions apply. Call for details.

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Boost the UK economy

The Government has announced a new Vehicle Scrappage Scheme that will help the struggling car industry during the current downturn. A £2,000 discount will be offered to vehicle owners towards buying a new vehicle if the vehicle they own is 10 years old or more and if they have owned their vehicle more than 12 months.

£300,000,000 will be funded from the Government for this scheme. The scheme will help replace older models and replace them with lower emission vehicles.

Not only will the Vehicle Scrappage Scheme help UK in the current downturn it will help towards reducing emissions that will benefit our environment. By replacing heavily polluting cars with more efficient and less polluting cars it will also help towards the **Road Safety** as more modern vehicles have a wider range of standard safety features.

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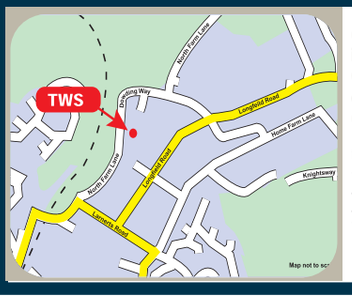

Grand Vitara range official fuel consumption figures in mpg (L/100km): urban from 22.6 (12.5) to 32.5 (8.7), extra urban from 34.9 (8.1) to 45.6 (6.2), combined from 29.1 (9.7) to 39.2 (7.2). CO_2 emissions from 189g/km to 228g/km.

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†Finance subject to status (Over 18's only), Written quotations available on request. A guarantee may be required. All offers and vehicles offered are subject to availability while stocks last. Please note models portrayed are for illustration purposes only. Details correct at time of going to press. *50% Deposit required over 2 years. ♦30% deposit required over 2 years. ^40% deposit required over 2 years.

DrivingReview

by STEVE LOADER
CHIEF DRIVING CORRESPONDENT
steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

Suzuki Alto

Alto low in price but fails to hit high notes

I'M A martyr to my sinuses, but cleared them spectacularly this week in the new Suzuki Alto.

Of course, I live with noxious new car niffs but the Alto's were particularly powerful even after considering the modest 2,000 miles of the test car.

The smell was also an unmistakable clue to some hard plastics used to fit out the cabin, although the Indian-built car was a tribute to how far motor manufacturing has advanced in that country.

Notorious not so long ago for the hideous Hindustan Ambassador – a reborn 1950s Morris Oxford well past its sell-by date – India is now famous as a potential motor sales and production powerhouse.

A major reason is Suzuki's Maruti site, which produces the Alto and has replaced Hindustan as India's premier car plant.

Apart from meeting domestic demand, this factory now churns out Altos and the forthcoming Nissan Pixo clone arriving here shortly to meet new Western demand for low pollution, recession-busting city cars.

With low profit margins on small motors, India's low-labour costs help sweeten the deal, though corners are being cut – without compromising safety, of course.

First of all, there is that cheap interior feel – and smell – and pop-out rather than wind down windows on the rear doors.

Secondly, the Alto lives up to its name with a high-pitched three-cylinder 1.0-litre petrol engine. OK, 'three-pot' units always transmit some unevenness, but the Alto's bonnet can sound like home to a flock of pigeons dancing on a cake tin of nuts and bolts.

In fact, it is probably the closest thing I've heard to the Moulinex blender used in the legendary Citroën 2CV.

Car prices less than Parker's

Our prices are less than Parker's Price Guide†

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Deposit	£2,299	Total charge for credit	£1,387.24
One monthly payment**	£294	Mileage per annum	6,000
Final payment^	£2,841.56	Excess mileage charge per mile	14.9p
Total amount payable	£8,886.24	APR	11.9%

**A £195 Credit Facility Fee is included in the first monthly payment. ^ A £95 Completion Fee is included in the Final Payment.

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Mind you, this is probably as much down to poor insulation between engine and cabin – Toyota, Daihatsu, Citroën and Peugeot have made a much better fist of it there on their three-cylinder city cars.

In terms of power, the Suzuki kitchen appliance is pretty lively; the light five-speed 'box and 67bhp will take you from 0-62mph in 13.5 seconds.

The engine is emasculated by the four-speed auto option though – you'll need to hoist a spinnaker and run before the wind to hit 60mph in less than 17 seconds.

That said, £600 extra for the auto is reasonable for those who really do want an easy-driving city runabout.

What most impressed me about the car though is the wheel-at-each-corner design, delivering two major benefits: firstly, the best cabin space possible within its on-road footprint and a ride with less fore and aft pitching.

Suzuki has also weighted the pliancy of the ride nicely against grip and handling. With that engine, it was never going to or intended to be a fireball, but the Alto can be piloted fairly aggressively – albeit noisily – when required and the lack of pitching and sagging on corners is impressive.

Despite everything said earlier about the engine, the car is also quite refined on the motorway.

Interior quality aside, the Alto cabin is also roomy for four, with a reasonable boot and decent stowage – the big dashboard bin and centre console are particularly useful – and I liked the high mounted audio controls, just a span from the left hand on the wheel.

Running costs should be ridiculously low with a potential for averaging 60mpg and insurance groupings of 1-2, though the car misses out narrowly on escaping road tax of £35/year.

DrivingStats

- Suzuki Alto SZ4 £7,960
- Range: £6,795-test car
- Garage stats: 3.5m by 1.6m five-door city car
- Powertrain: 996cc/67bhp) three-cylinder petrol engine driving front wheels through a five-speed manual gearbox
- Performance: top speed 96mph and 0-62mph in 13.5 seconds
- How green?: band-B (£35/year) road tax – 103g/km CO2 emissions
- Official fuel figures: combined 60.2mpg
- Euro NCAP safety rating (0-5 stars): n/a
- Fuel tank: 35 litres/7.7gallons
- Insurance group: 2
- Warranty: three years/60,000miles.
- Website: www.suzuki.co.uk
- Rivals: Chevrolet Matiz or Aveo, Citroen C1, Fiat Panda, Hyundai i10, Kia Picanto, Nissan Micra, Perodua Kelisa or Myvi, Peugeot 107, Proton Savvy, Toyota Aygo and Vauxhall Agila.

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Walldonway, Larkfield (Maidstone) 01732 870386

WJ King, Bromley 020 8464 3456

Our test car was the SZ4 flagship, but the various extras don't do much to justify a price tag of nearly eight grand that brings some impressive rivals into play (see Driving Stats above).

The sub-£7,000 SZ2 might be the better bet for those keen to cut their motoring budget.

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Excess mileage charge per mile	2.12p

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OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT FUEL CONSUMPTION FIGURES (LITRES PER 100KM/MPG) & CO_2 EMISSIONS (G/KM); C3 PICASSO RANGE: URBAN 6.0-9.4/47.1-30.1, EXTRA URBAN 4.0-5.5/70.6-51.4, COMBINED 4.7-6.9/60.1-40.9, CO_2 125-159.

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C-MAX, 1.8TDCi Zetec 5dr, ra08hjv, metallic moondust. with over00 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, all vehicles come with balance of 3 year. insurance group:7, silver, 4000 miles, £11499, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

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C-MAX, 2.0 Zetec 5dr Auto, bw57kxp, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air con, alloys, central locking, child seats, cloth upholstery, colour coding body, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, folding rear seats, heated screen, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, metallic paintwork, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio, remote locking, tinted glass. insurance group: 11, black, 10475 miles, £10995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

C-MAX, 2.0 Zetec 5dr Auto, ya07vbd, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, child locks, computer, driver airbag, foglights, front armrest, folding rear seats, heated screen, locking wheel nuts, lumbar support, immobiliser, metallic paintwork, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, seatback tables, side airbags, radio/cd, spoiler, rear headrests, tinted glass, blue, 6933 miles, £8995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.4 TDCi Style 5dr [Climate], nx58oou, adjustable seats, air conditioning, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:5, black, 10250 miles, £8995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.4 TDCi LX 5dr [AC], lw53lcf, metallic vitro. abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:5, green, 49434 miles, £4995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

FOCUS, 1.8 TDCi Titanium 3dr, 11426 miles, £11995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

FOCUS C-MAX, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air con, alloys, central locking, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, with over0 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, 1 year warranty and roadside assistance. insurance group:6, blue, 40000 miles, £7495, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

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FUSION, 1.4 Style 5dr [Climate], bf57jsu, adjustable seats, air conditioning, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests, contact the used car team for more help, all vehicles come with balance of 3 year. insurance group:5, blue, 8389 miles, £7995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

FUSION, 1.6 Zetec 5dr Auto [Climate], fv06yds, metallic amethyst. abs, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:6, mauve, 17085 miles, £6995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

GALAXY, 2.0 TDCi Zetec 5dr Auto DVD MULTI MEDIA, ek57dhf, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, park distance control, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, roof rails, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, traction control. insurance group:11, silver, 11509 miles, £15995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

GALAXY, 2.2 TDCi Ghia 5dr*GHIA X PACK+DVD NAV+ONLY 21 MILE, lx09vhc, dvd navigation (price quoted includes, 21 miles, £24990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

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KA, 1.3i Zetec [70] 3dr [Climate], bf08xat, metallic panther. abs, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, power assisted steering, remote locking, rear headrests, with over 400 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, all vehicles come with balance of 3 year, central locking, colour coding body, heated screen, locking wheel nuts, black, 6128 miles, £6995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

KA, 1.3i Collection [70] 3dr, wf54fvb, central locking, computer, driver airbag, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, power assisted steering, radio/cd, rear headrests, air conditioning. insurance group:3, silver, 39614 miles, £3990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

KA, 1.3i Zetec [70] 3dr [Climate], gl56edo, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, power assisted steering, remote locking, rear headrests, with over 400 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help. insurance group:4, silver, 11931 miles, £5495, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

KA, 1.6i Sportka SE 3dr **FULL LEATHER**, adjustable seats, air con, alloys, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, leather seats, immobiliser, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, insurance group:6, silver, 27111 miles, £5990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

KUGA, 2.5T Titanium 5dr**DVD NAV, LEATHER **, leather **, dvd sat nav, xenon headlights, titanium convenience pack, titanium appearance pack, 18 alloys, abs, climate control, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, sports seats, traction control. blue, 939 miles, £21450, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 2.0 TDCi Zetec 5dr contact the used car team for more help, abs, adjustable seats, air con, alloys, central locking, child locks, cloth upholstery, climate control, colour coding body, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors/windows, foglights, electrically adjustable seats, immobiliser, metallic paintwork, multi function steering wheel, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio, remote locking. insurance group: 8, silver, 15869 miles, £13995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 2.0 TDCi Titanium X 5dr, hn08nuh, metallic thunder. with over 400 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, all vehicles come with balance of 3 year, 18 alloys, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, colour coding body, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, heated seats, limited slip differential, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, metallic paintwork, multi function steering wheel, passenger airbag, pearlescent paint, power assisted steering. insurance group:9, grey, 23913 miles, £15495, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 2.0 TDCi Titanium 5dr, gn08lby, 11151 miles, £14495, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

RANGER THUNDER AUTOMATIC, lv58kmz, 56 ps, max weight 2985 kg, max pulling weight 3000 kg, cat alarm, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, one tax, warrantied mileage, reverse parking sensors. 5 seater, 20 alloy wheels please call steve wales in our commercial department, silver, 1005 miles, £13995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

RANGER WILDTRAK, 156 ps, max weight 2985 kg, max pulling weight 3000 kg. alloys, cat 1 alarm, reverse parking sensors, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, warranty, warrantied mileage. 5 seater, blue, 8 miles, £14645, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

S-MAX, 1.8 TDCi Titanium 5dr [5]*TITANIUM X PACK+DVD NAV*, ef08lkc, alloys, climate control, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors/windows, foglights, electrically adjustable seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, park distance control, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd multichanger, sports seats, dvd touch screen sat nav, 18 alloy wheel upgrade, panoramic roof, power fold mirrors, privacy glass, titanium x pack. insurance group:10, grey, 12476 miles, £17990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

S-MAX, 1.8 TDCi Titanium 5dr [5] X PACK, steering column/wheel, alloy wheels, climate control, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, immobiliser, park distance control, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd multichanger, sports seats. insurance group: 10, black, 19870 miles, £15995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

S-MAX, 2.0 TDCi Titanium 5dr Auto, ad08xpb, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, alloy wheels, climate control, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, park distance control, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, sports seats. insurance group:11, grey, 16343 miles, £16990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

S-MAX, 1.8 TDCi Titanium 5dr [5] ***TITANIUM X PACK***, ek08dhu, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, alloy wheels, climate control, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, park distance control, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd multichanger, rear headrests, sports seats, 18 alloy wheel upgrade, alcantara leather trim, auto lights and wipers, climate controlled air conditioning, electric heated door mirrors, esp traction control, ford direct, global opening and closing, heated front windscreen, panoramic roof, sony cd player, titanium x pack. insurance group:10, black, 11286 miles, £17990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

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Motability

Vehicles shown feature metallic paint available at extra cost (Matiz £325, Aveo £350, Captiva £400). 3 years/30,000 miles full service package at an optional cost (Matiz and Aveo £249, Captiva £349). Available at participating retailers only. Not available in conjunction with any other offers. Savings against current man. rec. price at time of publication and available on UK supplied vehicles ordered and registered before 30th June 2009. Prices correct at time of press. (Chev71670)

Official Government Environment Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). Aveo 1.2 S 3dr: Urban - 39.2 (7.2), Extra-urban - 61.4 (4.6), Combined - 51.4 (5.5). CO_2 emissions 132g/km. Captiva 2.4 Petrol LS 5-seat: Urban - 23.5 (12.0), Extra-urban - 39.8 (7.1), Combined - 31.7 (8.9). CO_2 emissions 217g/km. Matiz 0.8 S 5dr: Urban - 43.5 (6.5), Extra-urban - 68.9 (4.1), Combined - 56.5 (5.0). CO_2 emissions 119g/km.

FORD

TRANSIT, Low Roof Van TDi 85ps, ng06roh, swb. white, 32000 miles, £5990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

TRANSIT 280 GLX, lv56jwn, 130 ps, panel van, tonic. cat 1 alarm, factory fitted bulk head, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, ply lined, swb, warranty, warrantied mileage. 3 seater, blue, 28500 miles, £8999, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

TRANSIT 280 SWB, ng06lxr, 85 ps, panel van, max weight 2800 kg, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, ply bulkhead, ply lined, swb, warranty, warrantied mileage, white, 32000 miles, £6499, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

TRANSIT 280 SWB, bp56fyg, 85 bhp, panel van, max weight 2800 kg, factory fitted bulk head, ply lined, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, swb, warrantied mileage, warranty. 3 seater, white, 35531 miles, £7499, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

TRANSIT CONNECT, gl09smc, panel van, cd player, remote locking. white, 100 miles, £9995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

TRANSIT CONNECT 200 SWB, 75 ps, panel van, max weight 2000 kg. finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, swb, warranty, warrantied mileage. 2 seater, white, 8 miles, £7695, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

TRANSIT CONNECT 230 LX, 10 ps, panel van, max weight 2300 kg, finance available, full dealer facilities, high roof, hp+leasing, lwb, one ply bulkhead, ply lined, warranty, warrantied mileage, white, 1975 miles, £8499, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

TRANSIT CONNECT L, 75 ps, panel van, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, swb, warranty, warrantied mileage. 2 seater, white, 10 miles, £7999, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

TRANSIT CONNECT LWB LX A/C, an08ujj, 110 ps, panel van, max weight 2300 kg, reverse parking sensors, finance available, full dealer facilities, high roof, hp+leasing, lwb, ply bulkhead, warranty, warrantied mileage, silver, 5575 miles, £10999, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

TRANSIT SPORT, 140 ps, panel van, max weight 2600 kg. alloy wheels, factory fitted bulk head, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, warranty. 3 seater, black, 8 miles, £16999, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

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CIVIC, 2.2 i-CTDi Sport 5dr, oe56ewl, adjustable seats, alloys, climate control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, front armrest, head restraints, headlight washers, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, traction control. insurance group:10, silver, 31000 miles, £10995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

JAZZ, 1.4i-DSi SE Sport 5dr CVT-7, gk53mup, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, electric sunroof, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:3, green, 51500 miles, £4995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

HYUNDAI

GETZ, 1.1 GSI 3dr, gf05cwu, abs, adjustable steering column/wheel, central locking, driver airbag, folding rear seats, electric windows, immobiliser, passenger airbag, radio/cd, power assisted steering. insurance group:3, red, 40000 miles, £3495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

KIA

PICANTO, 1.1 LS 5dr, gj57cdu, abs, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, central locking, driver airbag, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:3, red, 19232 miles, £4495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

MAZDA

BT-50, lx08ymg, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, warranty, warrantied mileage, silver, 3468 miles, £7999, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

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A150, 5 DOOR Classic SE, 2009, polar silver metallic, 5000 miles, £15332, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

A150, Avantgarde SE Manual 3 DR Avantgarde SE, 2005, saturn red, 38483 miles, £9865, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

A160, 5dr Classic SE, 2009, cosmos black metallic, 3000 miles, £14498, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

A160 CDI, 5 DOOR Classic SE, 2008, polar silver metallic, 3000 miles, £11995, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

A160 CDI, 5 DOOR Classic SE, 2009, mistral blue, 5000 miles, £14980, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

A160 CDI, 5 DOOR Classic SE, 2009, cosmos black metallic, 5000 miles, £15480, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

A180 CDI, Classic SE Manual 5 DR Classic SE, 2006, atoll blue metallic, 27024 miles, £8997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

A180 CDI, Avantgarde SE Manual 5 DR Avantgarde SE, 2006, comet grey, metallic, 31110 miles, £10997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

A180 CDI, Classic SE Manual 5 DR Classic SE, 2006, atoll blue metallic, 28143 miles, £9997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

A180 CDI, Avantgarde SE Manual 5 DR Avantgarde SE, 2006, polar silver metallic, 19028 miles, £10495, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

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E280 CDI, 2009, iridium silver metallic, 3000 miles, £30648, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

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E320 CDI, Sport, 2006, iridium silver metallic, 18360 miles, £22768, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E350, Avantgarde, 2005, brilliant silver metallic, 55796 miles, £14997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

GL320 CDI, 2007, iridium silver metallic, 22556 miles, £31600, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

ML280 CDI, Sport, 2007, obsidian black metallic, 21372 miles, £25290, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

ML280 CDI, Sport, 2009, obsidian black metallic, 2000 miles, £37824, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

R320 CDI, LWB Sport, 2007, obsidian black metallic, 20418 miles, £24998, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

R320 CDI, LWB Sport, 2007, iridium silver metallic, 13074 miles, £25784, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

S320 CDI, 2006, carneol red metallic, 28609 miles, £29997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

SLK200 KOMPRESSOR, 2006, iridium silver metallic, 5992 miles, £19898, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

SLK200 KOMPRESSOR, 2007, obsidian black metallic, 40400 miles, £19498, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

SLK200 KOMPRESSOR, 2008, obsidian black metallic, 295 miles, £26997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

SLK280, ROADSTER, 2009, obsidian black metallic, 3000 miles, £34495, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

VITO, 111cdi xlong 2.2, ey04phz, panel van, mot-10-2009. electric windows, factory fitted bulk head, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, lwb. red, 57500 miles, £5990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

PEUGEOT

107, 1.0 Sport XS 3dr, abs, adjustable steering column/wheel, alloys, driver airbag, electric windows, mmobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, rear armrest, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:1, black, 9800 miles, £6995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

207, 1.4 Urban 3dr, gk57vxn, abs, adjustable seats, computer, driver airbag, folding rear seats, electric windows, immobiliser, head restraints, passenger airbag, radio/cd, power assisted steering, rear armrest, remote locking, side airbags. insurance group:3, blue, 4587 miles, £6495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

207, 1.6 HDi 90 Sport 3dr, gl07rzz, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, sports seats. insurance group:5, blue, 18000 miles, £7995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

SMART

FORTWO COUPÉ PASSION, 2008, silver metallic, 3000 miles, £8199, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

FORTWO COUPÉ PASSION, 2006, sugar candy pink, 7262 miles, £6999, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

FORTWO COUPÉ PASSION, 2008, blue metallic, 7400 miles, £7990, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

FORTWO COUPÉ PASSION, 2008, crystal white, 5500 miles, £8199, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

FORTWO COUPÉ PASSION, 2007, lite white, 16300 miles, £5999, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

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IMPREZA, 2.0 WRX AWD Turbo 4dr, adjustable steering column/wheel, air con, alloys, central locking, driver airbag, electric mirrors/windows, foglights, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, side airbags, radio/cd, sports seats. insurance group: 20, blue, 31500 miles, £8995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

TOYOTA

YARIS, 1.0 VVT-i Colour Collection 3dr, computer, driver airbag, electric windows, foglights, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, insurance group: 2, silver, 26000 miles, £4995, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

VAUXHALL

ASTRA, 1.6i 16V SXi Digital 5dr, abs, air con, alloys, central locking, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, sports seats. insurance group: 6, black, 23000 miles, £6995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

CORSA, 1.4i 16V SXi 5dr Auto [AC], vn07ons, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, driver airbag, folding rear seats, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, passenger airbag, radio/cd, power assisted steering, rear headrests, remote locking, side airbags, sports seats. insurance group:4, black, 15000 miles, £8895, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

ZAFIRA, 1.9 CDTi SRi [150] 5dr [Exterior Pack], gj56uad, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, head restraints, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, rear armrest, remote locking, roof rails, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, sports seats, traction control, with over 400 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, 1 year warranty and roadside assistance. insurance group:9, blue, 28402 miles, £9600, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

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GOLF, 2.0 GT TDI 5dr, wg55wln, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, climate control, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, sports seats, traction control. insurance group:13, grey, 31300 miles, £10995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

VOLVO

V40, 2.0T SE 5dr Auto, gf03vnk, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, alloy wheels, climate control, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, folding rear seats, leather seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, rear armrest, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:14, black, 65000 miles, £5495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

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07/07	107 Urban 1.0, 5dr, Onyx Black, 27k miles	£5988	£5988
06/06	206 Verve 1.4 Hdi, 5dr, Moonstone, 27k miles	£6992	£6392
08/08	207 S 1.4,16v, 3dr, Aegean Blue, 10k miles	£7850	£7380
07/07	207 Sport 1.6 AUTO, 3dr, Neysha Blue, 29k miles	£8395	£7995
07/07	207 Sport Hdi 90, 5 dr, Neysha Blue, 26k miles	£7995	£7350
08/57	207 Sport Hdi 90, 5 dr, Blue, 17k miles	£8675	£7966
06/56	407 Sport Hdi 110, 4 dr, Onyx Black, 29k miles	£9495	£8888
08/08	207 CC GT 120 Leather, Aluminium, 6k miles	£16840 list	£12995
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07/07	107 1.0 Urban 3dr, Antigua Blue, 14,671 Miles	£6195	£5495
58/08	107 1.0 Kiss 3dr, Laser Red, 2,938 Miles	£6333	£5999
56/06	207 1.4 S 3dr, Aluminium, 21,500 Miles	£6650	£6290
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Commercial vehicles feature

by STEVELOADER

Signs of recovery for newest van models

WANTED: The Vauxhall Vivaro is popular on the used market, but market experts say there are now keen prices for new ones

VAN sales are a good barometer of the economy and the market is consequently underlining the UK recession.

Rather than investing in new vans, big fleets are holding off while cautious smaller operators and 'one-man bands' are hunting bargains on the used market. But a shortage of quality used stock means many customers may have to yield soon to some tempting deals on new vehicles.

George Alexander, editor of Glass's Guide to Commercial Vehicle Values, says auctions have been frantic at times, but more due to rarity of good used models than any stability within the wider economy:

He said: "Smaller Ford Transits are enjoying a healthy level of demand, as are all similarly sized vans such as Renault's Trafic and Vauxhall's Vivaro.

Trend

"Older examples with sensible mileage and extras such as air-conditioning and metallic paint also catch the eye and are snapped up quickly."

Another interesting sign of the times is that the trend for sporty and customised vans has tailed off, he said: "Standard vans rated above 130PS (128bhp) are somewhat out of vogue, although the image-conscious buyer will always aspire to sporty versions with plenty of 'oomph'."

But he added: "In an effort to boost registrations of new vans, big discounts off the list price are being widely publicised by manufacturers, which means that prices for nearly-new models have come under downward pressure. The used marketplace is having difficulty in soaking up an excess of 3.5 tonne vans, with only the best late-year stock avoiding an inevitable drop in price.

"At this weight, long and high panel vans with ample power set the pace whilst most run-of-the-mill stock sells at prices, which compared to what they cost when new, must surely represent exceptional value for money.

"Premium models from the Mercedes-Benz and Volkswagen stables wear high mileage particularly well and so often buck the trend."

Toyota building up good niche status

TOYOTA introduced the Hiace to the UK market in 1972, but it has never challenged sales of the market leading Ford Transit or other major panel van champs.

Instead, the Japanese contender has built a niche as a cost-effective, rugged and reliable contender that can notch up hundreds of thousands of trouble-free miles and is sought after new and used by loyal fans.

It is currently available new with a choice of two 2.5-litre diesel engine outputs of 94bhp or 115bhp for short and long wheelbase models and with a choice of tailgate or double rear doors.

Toyota also offers just one high-specification grade from about £13,000, though there are deals available in the current climate and vehicles can be customized using official accessory packs and options.

by STEVELOADER

Merc dealer's upbeat view

KENT Mercedes-Benz commercial vehicle dealer Sparshatts believes the van trade is seeing signs of a recovery.

Sales director Andrew Sparshatt said: "UK van sales fell off a cliff last October, but we are seeing signs of improvement now.

"The market is still understandably price-conscious and Mercedes-Benz trades on quality, longevity and resale values rather than discounting – some buyers will naturally shop around.

"Others realise they may have to spend more at first for our vehicles, but operating costs are about the same as they get more back when they sell and courier companies, for instance, know the value of covering big mileages in confidence."

He added that his group, which has sites in Sittingbourne, Ashford, Tunbridge Wells and Dartford, had witnessed robust demand for nearly new stock, but pointed out that the renowned durability and longevity of Mercedes-Benz vans caused canny owners to hold onto their vehicles in these tougher times.

This had been particularly true in the bigger panel van sector contested by the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter.

"It is the smaller Vito that has kept us turning over," he said. "These sell to smaller operators and sole traders who have a more hands-on feel for whether business is doing well day-to-day and whether they can afford a new van."

He added that the Vito was particularly popular too for its 'Dualiner' option, which adds rear seating, and an array of options.

"You can buy a Vito in base colour with the junior engine and specification, but most people spend £16,000-21,000 to enjoy their time with the vehicle and make more when they sell on."

Sprinting into a greener future

MERCEDES-BENZ Sprinter vans are in demand on the used market, but the big-selling load-lugger is also a star in the move to leaner and greener operating.

This is due to availability of the ECO-Start system, which cuts the ignition when the vehicle is stationary in traffic and then smoothly restarts it when the driver goes to pull away.

The system can be switched on and off, though the button has been deleted and the 'on' mode selected permanently by users committed to greener operating.

WINNER: The Citroën Nemo won best small van status at Fleet awards

Champion status for latest Citroëns

CITROËN is the current Fleet Van Awards champ after scooping three of the top honours last time.

The new Berlingo (from £10,595 including VAT and delivery) is Van of the Year and also gained the Best Small Van award, while the little Nemo van (pictured and from £8,295 including VAT and delivery) completed Citroën's hat trick by taking the Best City Van gong.

Judges, drawn from major fleet operators and other van experts, liked the Berlingo's all-new design, good green credentials and overall fleet package.

Details impressed too, such as the 'Extenso' multi-function dual passenger seat and standard-fit Trafficmaster sat nav and Trackstar stolen vehicle tracking and the dual fuel (petrol/LPG) option. The judges also liked the dual fuel option for the Nemo.

Citroën commercial vehicle operations manager Robert Handyside said: "These new vans demonstrate the success of Citroën's proactive approach in developing transport solutions enabling businesses to become greener and more financially and operationally efficient."

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07	57	Combo	1.3 CDTi	PAS, Remote Central Locking	White	£12,500 +VAT	£7,495+VAT	£5,005
08	08	Vivaro	2.0CDTi	SWB, 90BHP	White	£17,250 +VAT	£10,295+VAT	£6,955
08	08	Vivaro	2.0CDTI	115bhp, sportive	Black	£17750 +VAT	£11,495+VAT	£6,255
08	58	Vivaro	2.0CDTI	Sportive SWB	Black	£18,750 +VAT	£11,995+VAT	£6,755
08	58	Vivaro	2.0CDTI	Sportive Double cab	Black	£20,750 +VAT	£13,995+VAT	£6,755
08	58	Vivaro	2.0CDTI	Sportive, Double cab	Silver	£20,750 +VAT	£13,995+VAT	£6,755
08	58	Vivaro	2.0CDTI	SWB, Air con, Twin Side Doors	Ink Blue	£18,250 + VAT	£11,995+VAT	£6,255

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Slowdown in the jobs slide

SOME cautious good news on the Kent jobs front this week as a leading business advisory and finance giant reported a slowdown in the jobs slide and a local recruitment firm announced a "major rise" in business, ***writes Tony Patey***.

April saw the slowest falls in permanent placements and temporary billings for seven months, according to the latest report on jobs by KPMG, whose Gatwick office covers Kent, and the Recruitment and Employment Confederation.

Their regular report is reckoned to be the most comprehensive guide to the UK labour market, drawing on original survey data provided by recruitment consultancies.

However, although they report a slowdown in billings falls, they say the rates of decline remained "historically sharp" with "continued hesitancy among client firms with regard to hiring decisions". Recruitment consultancies reported another drop in vacancies during April, but the latest reduction was the least marked in five months, with both permanent and temporary vacancies declining at weaker rates. Wage falls are also slowing as well.

Average salaries for those placed in permanent jobs continued to fall sharply in April, but at the slowest rate in three months. Hourly rates of pay for staff in temporary/contract employment also declined at the least marked pace since January.

Harley Richards, head of people services at KPMG in Gatwick, said: "The modest improvement in all aspects of the employment market we started to see in March continued throughout April."

Kevin Green, chief executive of the REC, said: "These figures show recruiters are feeling slightly more optimistic. The Government must do all it can to maintain this by protecting the UK's flexible labour market."

Meantime, the start of the new financial year has brought evidence of growing confidence in Kent's business community, according to Acorn Recruitment. It says April saw a major rise in the number of local companies wanting to take on new staff.

EARLY SIGNS: Geoff Newman

The agency said its workload more than doubled last month compared with March, and was up more than 40 per cent on the same period last year.

"We filled 97 jobs in April, which was far and away our best performance so far this year," said managing director Geoff Newman.

"In part the increase is down to our success as a business, but I believe it is also because confidence is beginning to come back into sections of Kent's business community.

"It is noticeable, for example, that companies are starting to take on permanent staff whereas a few months ago they only wanted temporary workers. Businesses that were adopting a wait-and-see policy until they had a clearer idea of where the economy was heading are now willing to commit to taking on new staff.

"White-collar jobs – the type that are dominant in mid and west Kent and which we specialise in – were among the first to be affected by the downturn and it could well be that what we are noticing is an early signal that the economy is beginning to recover and office workers are among the first to benefit.

"We are seeing strong demand for good quality candidates right across our branch network and I have no reason to believe that this trend won't continue. In fact, we are recruiting more staff ourselves."

Acorn Recruitment has offices in Kings Hill, Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells, as well as Crawley in West Sussex.

Prince welcomes May Day Hero Peter

EDF Energy worker Peter Ashby made a difference when he was named a May Day Hero by Business in the Community and met the Prince of Wales at the Royal's May Day Summit.

Mr Ashby, 49, who works at the firm's offices in Chatham and lives in Canterbury, joined Prince Charles and leaders of Britain's big businesses when they met in London to discuss joint action on climate change. Afterwards he told KOS Media: "The Prince shook my hand and congratulated all the May Day Heroes. It was great to be recognised for having made a positive contribution. It was a nice reward and interesting talking to the other May Day Heroes. None of us thought we deserved such an honour. We do what we do because it is important to make a difference."

Mr Ashby was chosen because of his commitment to recycling, reducing waste and cutting emissions. He said: "I've been passionate about the environment all my life but I never expected it would lead to my meeting the Prince of Wales."

Mr Ashby has taken his passion for the environment to astronomical levels – even the telescopes he uses for his hobby of stargazing are made from recycled cardboard tubes. Mr Ashby is also a member of a local online recycling group.

He said: "You'd be amazed at what you can pick up. I've had three cars through the group. I don't approve of a throwaway society."

He is one of EDF Energy's ambassadors, appointed to encourage colleagues to become more environmentally friendly by recycling, saving energy, producing less waste and car sharing.

HERO: Peter Ashby sees Prince Charles greet another guest

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Academy is now clear for take-off

A MAJOR business link with academia to tackle the big shortage of skilled aircraft engineers is being set up at the Romney Marsh site of Lydd Airport.

By **TONY PATEY**
tony.patey@kosmedia.co.uk

It is setting up an aviation engineering training scheme – or 'aviation academy' – and managers have already had meetings with academic institutions and Government-appointed skills bodies to plan the development.

The aim is to establish a dedicated course which would equip students from Kent and East Sussex with an internationally-recognised qualification in aeronautical engineering, and the airport plans to improve existing facilities to accommodate students.

Once the airport has reached agreement with a college in the region, the college will administer the running of the course and students will split their time between the two sites.

Although the aviation academy is not directly linked with LAA's existing planning applications to build a new terminal and extend the runway, managing director Cliff Spink said there's a need to develop appropriate training programmes to accompany the redevelopment proposals.

He said the airport was very keen to explore new initiatives which will benefit the community. Mr Spink added: "The airport plays a big part in the local community and I hope people can support us in all aspects of our development.

"The airport touches many people's lives, whether they work here themselves, use our services or know someone or have a family member who works here."

He also believes Lydd can play a key role in improving the UK's aircraft maintenance facilities and creating jobs for engineers. There is already an aviation engineering company based at Lydd with a long waiting list of customers.

Similar aviation academies at Leeds-Bradford, Newcastle, Blackpool and Shoreham airports have enabled employers to recruit newly qualified staff directly and allow a swift transition from studying to employment.

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Mum Debbie, Mollie and Ben
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Debbie

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FIRST STEP: From left – Christopher Guest, Amanda Edwards of KCC, Chanel Fisk, Sarah-Jayne Ellcock, Joseph Mullen, Francesca Austin, Sian Phelan, Sam Da Costa and Jack Cox outside County Hall

EIGHT apprentices have been recruited by Kent Highways to help look after the county's roads.

Their tasks include inspecting roads, co-ordinating roadworks, and learning about how Kent Highways keeps in touch with communities.

The young people are Francesca Austin from Aylesford, Sam De Costa (Ramsgate), Jack Cox (Folkestone), Sarah-Jayne Ellcock (Margate), Chanel Fisk (Rochester), Ellen Gilles (Dymchurch), Christopher Guest (Tunbridge Wells), and Sian Phelan (Ashford).

They were chosen from 60 candidates and will initially be working for a year as part of the Kent County Council apprenticeship programme.

Kent Highways community delivery manager David Aspinall said: "This is a good way for young people to get started at KCC and learn some of the skills needed for highways services."

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Sun, sea and science make Dr Dave a contented man

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Pharmaceuticals giant Pfizer has just appointed **Dr David Roblin** as its new head of research and site director at its European R&D headquarters in Sandwich.

He takes over from Dr Annette Doherty, who has been appointed Pfizer's head of worldwide pharmaceutical sciences, at one of Kent's largest private sector employers, with about 3,500 people.

He trained as a doctor, is a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, and joined Pfizer in 1995. Experiences as a doctor working with patients in intensive care, and in particular with people affected by HIV, made him determined to discover more about pharmacology and how drugs could be invented and meet the medical needs he saw.

After three years he left the company to become head of medical affairs for infectious diseases for Bayer, but then returned to Pfizer and was appointed clinical research and development head in 2003.

As well as being a keen sportsman, Dr Roblin, a 42-year-old father of three, enjoys walking on the Downs, finding quality local produce at farmers' markets and the occasional pint of bitter.

He holds an honorary senior lectureship at Brighton and Sussex Medical School where he contributes to the curriculum, and is also a director of Technology Enterprise Kent, a non-profit making organisation offering advice and support to entrepreneurs.

He spoke to KOS Media business editor Tony Patey.

Q What was your favourite subject at school – was it chemistry, or biology? At what point did you want to become a doctor, and why?

A In all honesty I was a bit of a jack of all trades, enjoying most things including music and sport. I gravitated to a degree in bio-chemistry and medicine really looking for challenges. Taking six years at university put a challenge on my father's finances. I wanted to become a doctor because it was the next challenge and maybe this explains why I enjoy my job so much; every day is full of opportunities and challenges. I couldn't imagine a better job.

I've always enjoyed working with people and being able to improve the lives of patients both as a doctor and now in my current role. These are major motivating factors to me.

Q What would you say were the best points in your career (apart from getting this job, of course), and what would you say were the not so good points?

A The best points: getting my medical degree; getting my first job treating patients; writing my first prescription (my writing was legible initially); running the medical wards in hospitals I worked in; publishing my first paper in the journal Thorax; getting my first medicine approved for patients; and obviously getting this job.

The bad points were when I saw patients I couldn't treat adequately and the disappointment when we test a new medicine in development and find out it doesn't work in patients.

Q What did you learn from them?

A Hard work repays.

Q What was it like when you returned to Pfizer in 2003?

A This is a very exciting time. A diagnosis of HIV/Aids 15 years ago was virtually a death sentence but it is now a manageable, albeit chronic, condition.

I am incredibly proud that scientists at Sandwich have played a major role in discovering and developing medicines for this disease.

The mapping of the genome, and our growing understanding of genetics, means that we have many more thousands of opportunities to explore in our research.

We are gaining greater and more profound understandings of disease and the chemistry and biology that we need to work with to produce effective medicines.

Pfizer is a very important part of the east Kent community and there are many attractions to bring top scientists to the area – not least the sea, the landscape and more sunshine than anywhere else in Britain.

And the coming of the high-speed rail links is going to be a major boost for our business and the community.

Q What was the best piece of advice you have had?

A From my mother, you get out of life what you put in. I apply that on a day-to-day basis and it is nearly always true.

Q What advice would you give to a young person wanting to become a doctor or go into pharmacy today?

A Do it. I have no regrets about my time in medicine and the pharmaceutical industry. I feel privileged to be able to research and develop new medicines, explore new science and try and create medicines of the future.

Does anyone have a better job?

Q Apart from doing the job to the best of your ability, what specific targets do you have at Sandwich?

A Sandwich has a long track record of success in producing important medicines for patients. Our challenge and obligation is to continue that success and use the explosion in understanding biology such as the mapping of the genome and the new technologies available to produce better, more effective and safer medicines for patients.

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Youth and experience combined

By TONY PATEY
tony.patey@kosmedia.co.uk

NORTH Kent Young Chamber was launched this week at Dartford's Leigh Technology Academy – linked directly to Thames Gateway Chamber of Commerce and aimed at bringing young people together with business.

The academy is forming a chamber board that will mirror the Thames Gateway Chamber, with directors taking an active role in bringing in young people.

Thames Gateway skills envoy and North Kent Young Chamber patron Sir David Melville said: "Involvement in the Young Chamber will play an important part in developing skills and preparing our future leaders.'

Frank Green, Leigh Academy's chief executive said it was another step for the school's style of education for which the state-of-the-art building has been a catalyst.

Dartford Borough Council leader Jeremy Kite said: "Leigh students behave like responsible citizens and much of this is attributed to the relaxed learning environment.

"I am immensely brought of these young people and feel the link with the Chamber can only enhance their job opportunities."

OPEN GATEWAY: Leigh Academy Young Chamber members, teachers and business delegates at the launch of the new institution

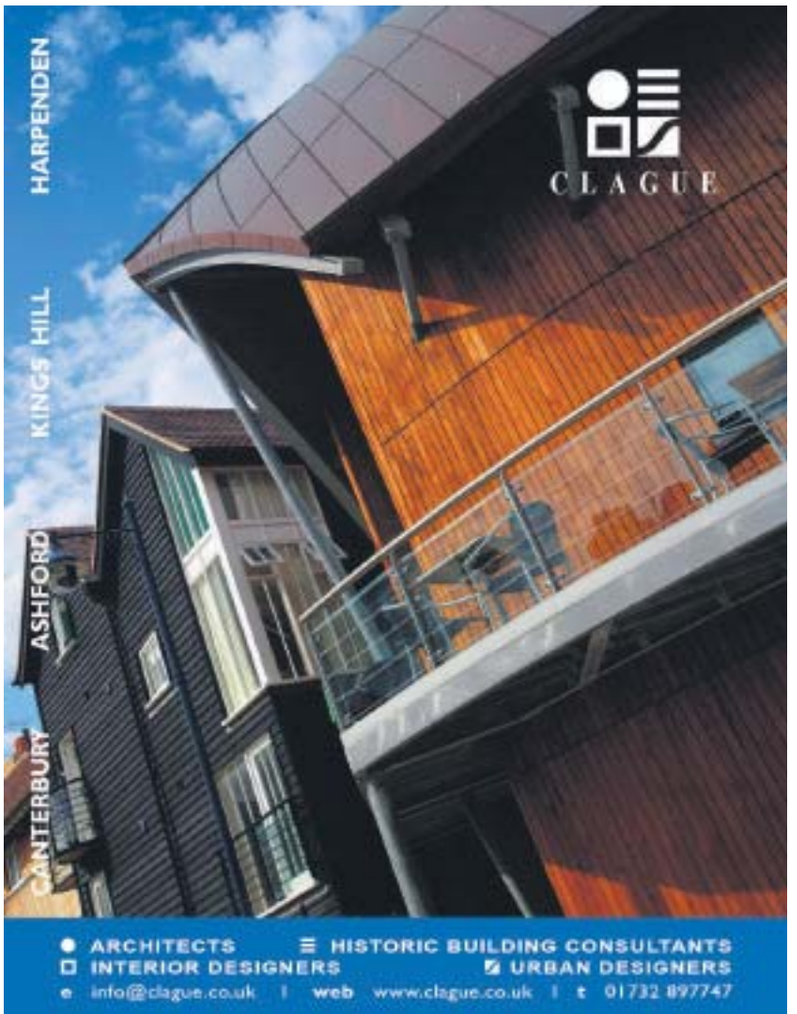
Foot in the door for legal firm

A KENT law firm was this week at the centre of a takeover which has led to the formation of one of the biggest manufacturing groups in the footcare market.

Buss Murton, which has offices in Dartford, Tunbridge Wells and Cranbrook, acted for longstanding Staffordshire-based client Langer UK, the market leader in the manufacture of foot orthoses – ankle braces.

It acquired for an undisclosed sum Derbyshire-based Talar Made, creating the largest specialist orthoses manufacturer in the UK. Talar Made is Langer's second acquisition in the last 12 months following its purchase of RX Laboratories in October.

Buss Murton's head of corporate business, Robert Sedgwick, said: "Langer's projected growth bucks the trend in the current economic climate and demonstrates that a high quality niche specialist can prosper even in difficult times."



Padwell Arms and Merry Boys on sale

TWO lovely Kent pubs are up for grabs – the Padwell Arms, a freehold house with restaurant near Sevenoaks, and the Merry Boys at East Peckham.

The Padwell, pictured right, is an early 18th century property with a main bar, 24-cover dining room, a separate 50-cover restaurant, three-bedroom owner's accommodation, trade terrace with seating capacity for 100 and car park.

It is currently owned by Duggie and Jane Goldie, who have just bought another pub in Cumbria. Christie + Co is asking £795,000 for the freehold.

The Merry Boys, pictured left, is a detached pub with three floors. It has open-plan trading areas on the ground floor and owner's accommodation arranged over the first and second floors. It includes an enclosed trade garden and parking for 10 vehicles.

An asking price of £250,000 is being sought for the freehold, also from Christie + Co's Maidstone office.

MORTGAGE RATES

RT: Rate type **R%:** Rate percentage **L:** Loan **U:** Until **OD:** Other details

FIXED

PRINCIPALITY
RT: FIXED **R%:** 4.74% **L:** 75% **U:** 31/03/2012
OD: £1,339

FIRST ACTIVE RBS
RT: FIXED **R%:** 3.79% **L:** 70% **U:** 30/06/2011
OD: £1,029

MARSDEN
RT: FIXED **R%:** 3.59% **L:** 75% **U:** 31/05/2011
OD: £1,223

ABBEY
RT: FIXED **R%:** 3.89% **L:** 75% **U:** 02/08/2011
OD: £1,515

OTHER

NATIONWIDE
RT: TRACKER **R%:** 3.38% **L:** 75% **U:** 3 YEARS
OD: £1,015

WOOLWICH
RT: TRACKER **R%:** 3.24% **L:** 70% **U:** 31/07/2012
OD: £1,034

MARSDEN
RT: TRACKER **R%:** 2.99% **L:** 70% **U:** 31/05/2011
OD: £1,123

ALLIANCE & LEICESTER
RT: TRACKER **R%:** 2.99% **L:** 75% **U:** 2 YEARS
OD: £2,310

• THESE RATES CANNOT BE GUARANTEED AND ARE CORRECT AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS

OPEN MARKET ANNUITY RATES FOR MATURING PENSION FUNDS – PER £10,000

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MALE AGED 60		FEMALE AGED 60	
LEGAL & GENERAL	£562	CANADA LIFE	£546
CANADA LIFE	£559	LEGAL & GENERAL	£541
AEGON SE	£549	NORWICH UNION	£534
PRUDENTIAL	£544	PRUDENTIAL	£533
NORWICH UNION	£544	AEGON SE	£531
MALE AGED 65		**FEMALE AGED 65**	
LEGAL & GENERAL	£617	CANADA LIFE	£598
CANADA LIFE	£617	LEGAL & GENERAL	£591
PRUDENTIAL	£607	PRUDENTIAL	£590
AEGON SE	£605	AEGON SE	£583
NORWICH UNION	£595	NORWICH UNION	£580

• THESE RATES CANNOT BE GUARANTEED AND ARE CORRECT AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS

LONG REIN: Savoy Ventures are the new tenants at Stone Castle's The Stable Block

Castle welcomes Savoy Ventures

MORE commercial property movement at Thames Gateway – Caxtons in Gravesend has let the ground-floor offices and a self-contained workshop/studio at Stone Castle, near Greenhithe.

The unique property is Grade-II listed and part dates back to the 12th century, when it was thought to have been a fortified manor house, and is set within landscaped grounds.

The new tenant is Savoy Ventures, which supplies non-emergency patient transport in London and the South East.

Managing director Jon Adams said that having wanted to move out of London they also needed more space.

Offices on the first floor of Stone Castle measure 1,734 sq ft and consist of 10 rooms of differing sizes. An agreed rent of £15,000 per annum has been set and there is a landlord break at the three-year point.

The Stable Block, as the workshop/studio is known, is a detached single-storey building to the rear of the castle. The accommodation is in three main parts and measures 894 sq ft. Rental was agreed at £5,000 pa, again with a landlord break at the three-year point.

Both properties have been let for four years.

By **LIZ RULE**
Pharon Independent Financial Advisers Ltd

I HAVE previously written about pension simplification, legislation introduced during 2006 that merged eight pension tax regimes – created over decades – into one new regime.

Although called simplification, it was actually reasonably complicated, as people who had generous pre-2006 benefits were entitled to keep them, meaning one had to not only know about the new regime, but also the previous eight. However, advisers and pension professionals worked hard to understand the new rules and make sure their clients were in suitable schemes.

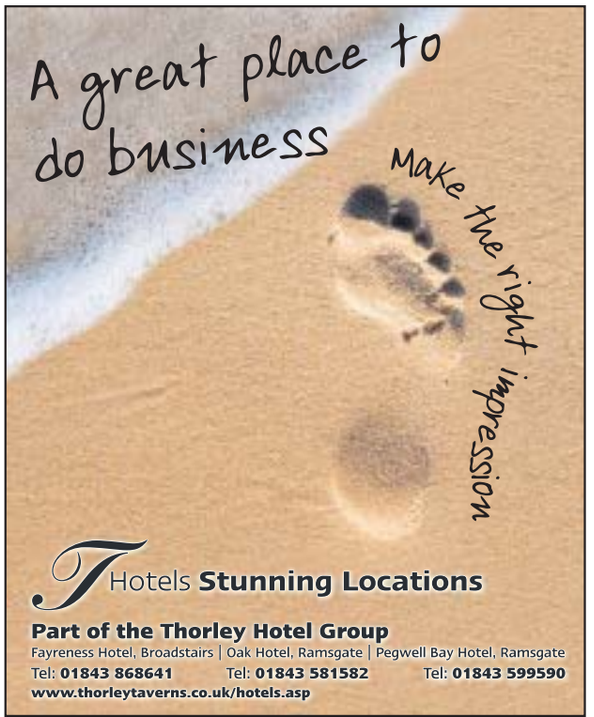
In 2007 the Government tinkered with the rules as they had spotted the loopholes being exploited.

Last month's Budget, however, was the first layer of new legislation to sit on top of simplification – the rule restricting tax relief for those earning over £150,000. The new rules have been set out in a 52-page document and will no doubt be changed again before they are deemed 'right'.

So there it is: set of rules number two, post-simplification; along with maintaining knowledge of the previous eight.

Marvellous. Also in the Budget was the complex plan to restrict personal allowances for those earning more than £100,000. So for some earning around £100,000 there will be an earnings trap, where each pound earned over £100,000 will not only get taxed at 40p, it will remove 50p of personal allowance, which results in an extra 20p tax. That's a tax rate of 60 per cent. I doubt many will be earning between £100,000 to £110,000 once this comes in.

More complexity that seems to achieve very little is the order of the day.



Timeline

Kent on Sunday sport takes a look back at the county's sporting action of yesteryear

1909

100 YEARS AGO – THE fabled Tonbridge 'Nursery' was proving a little too successful at churning out cricketers according to PW Warner, who complained in the Westminster Gazette that the sheer number of quality players produced at The Angel might "drive the amateur out of the game".

It was certainly giving Kent's manager Tom Pawley a headache. Only able to field 11 players at any one time, Pawley was resigned to losing Kent-born and bred cricketers to other counties – a number had already defected.

The latest prospect to enter the Nursery was Charles Blythe – the brother of Colin who was already creating a stir during his trial spell.

1959

50 YEARS AGO – ALAN Brown hung his head in anguish as Kent lost a thriller against Middlesex at Lord's by just two runs. Kent were nine wickets down, when Colin Page faced Fred Titmus in what proved to be the crucial over, needing nine runs to win.

Page blocked Titmus' first delivery, missed the second completely but then cheekily swatted the third to the covers for a boundary.

Fatally he then took a single off the fourth ball of the over, leaving Brown with the strike. The fast bowler slashed at the next delivery and was bowled middle stump, though he did have the consolation of a call-up to play for the MCC.

1984

25 YEARS AGO – STEVE Bruce and Tony Cascarino both hit the target as Gillingham gatecrashed Wimbledon's promotion party.

The Dons were heading for Division Two for the first time in their history and took the lead after just 10 seconds, but Bruce and Cascarino turned the game on its head and the Gills ran out 3-1 winners at Plough Lane.

Richard Ellison made a personal best of 72 in one-day cricket as Kent recovered from 24-4 to beat Middlesex in the B&H cup at Lord's. Alan Knott chipped in with 41, including a six off Wayne Daniel, while debutant Terry Alderman took two wickets in as many balls and was denied a hat-trick by Roland Butcher.

BOUNDARY: Alan Knott helped guide Kent to victory over Middlesex at Lord's

Hill climb a great escape for Steve

Screen legend and bike fan Steve McQueen changed his name to fool film bosses before racing at Knatts Valley

Picture: SIDCUPMOTORCYCLINGCLUB.CO.UK

HILL RACER: Steve McQueen riding on the old Knatts Valley hill climb and (inset) in the famous Great Escape motorbike scene

Going over old ground

By FRED ATKINS

WHEREVER the beaten track actually is, it's fair to say that Knatts Valley is some way off it.

A couple of miles to the south west of Brands Hatch, in the district of Sevenoaks, but with a Gravesend phone number, Knatts Valley is as scenic as it is isolated.

As far as public transport is concerned it may as well not exist, access is via single-track roads only and unless you are specifically looking, you could live within a few miles of it and never know it was there.

It is one of the unlikeliest places you would expect to find either a cinematic or broadcast icon and yet it was here in this fold of the North Downs that the actor Steve McQueen once raced a motorbike – and here that Murray Walker launched his television career.

Steep

Hill-climbing is on the fringes of motor racing, a lost branch of the sport that involved trying to ride a motorbike, and in some cases a car, up an almost ludicrously steep hill without either stalling, grinding to a halt or, worse still, picking an over-ambitiously direct route and rolling backwards.

The vertiginous slopes of Knatts Valley were ideal for this discipline. The first hum of motorbikes could be heard in the late 1920s at four sites in Kent, the others being Stacklands, Waldene and Le-Grimpe (which translated from the French means the climb).

The races used to be organised by the Sidcup Motorcycle Club and their website contains some remarkable images of McQueen racing a local rider called Alf Hagon in the 1950s.

McQueen was actually a driver and rider of some repute, but it looks as if he is trying to race in disguise.

That's because he wasn't supposed to be riding there at all, according to the club's press officer John Powell.

"He used a pseudonym to fool the film company," Powell said. "He rode their with his friend, the Hollywood stuntman Bud Ekins, who actually did the jump sequence in The Great Escape, when McQueen was not allowed to do it due to insurance reasons."

It's open to debate whether McQueen is a bigger icon than Murray Walker, the bandsaw-voiced Brummie to whom Formula 1 owes so much.

It is also arguable that Walker's voice might have carried even further than the sound of McQueen's bike when he did his first ever television commentary here at a 1949 hill climb.

The golden era of Knatts Valley was between the 1930s and 1950s, but as chunks of the land were sold off for a limited amount development it became impossible for racing to continue.

The valley still looks remarkably unspoilt, but horses now graze where engines once spluttered and Walker first unleashed his vocal chords on an unsuspecting public.

Sport updated daily online
www.kentnews.co.uk

Scheme boost for future tennis star

YOUNG tennis ace Mia Smith has received a boost after being included in the Lawn Tennis Association's talent identification scheme.

The 10-year-old from Tunbridge Wells is one of 420 juniors in the UK to be selected for the AEGON FutureStars programme.

Steven Martens, LTA Player director, said: "Identifying talent from an early age onwards is crucial for the sport. Tennis is a sport where skills need to be developed step by step and we hope that each of these AEGON FutureStars will go on to reach their full potential through the support we provide."

Former British number one Greg Rusedski is the Talent ID Ambassador for the LTA.

He said: "As an AEGON FutureStar, Mia has a great opportunity to improve her game and grow within the sport."

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Camier in shock after double win

Racer's Bank Holiday bonanza at Oulton Park

By TOM HOWARD

LEON Camier was in disbelief after recording a stunning double win on an underpowered bike in the British Superbike Championship on Bank Holiday Monday.

The Ashford rider showed his title credentials with a perfect weekend at Oulton Park, which saw Camier clinch pole position, two race wins and a fastest lap.

The feat was made even more stunning by the fact his Airwaves Yamaha team were running a machine with a standard road bike engine after a delay in the delivery of parts from Japan.

The engine left him significantly down on power compared to the rest of the field.

Securing his first double win of his career saw Camier top the championship, and the 22-year-old is still struggling to come to terms with how he managed to win both races.

Unbelievable

He told Kent on Sunday: "It was a perfect weekend and it was one we really did not expect.

"Going into the race we knew we were going to be down on power, but we managed to compensate for that. I was hoping to come away with a couple of podiums, which would have been fantastic, but to get two wins is unbelievable.

"I do not know how I did it with just a standard engine on the bike. It is a question everyone is asking. We must have been about 30 horse power down on everyone else, but we managed to win both races."

With three wins from the first four races, Camier's season is following in the same pattern as former team-mate Shane Byrne, who cruised his way to the title last year.

Camier leads the riders' standings by 11 points from Frenchman Sylvain Guintoli, but is refusing to think about a title challenge. He believes the next round at Donington Park will highlight his Yamaha's lack of power and will have to work harder for points.

"The key now is to just stay calm and keep plugging away," he said. "It is too early to start thinking about the title. Three wins from four is great, but I have got to stay calm.

"We have been kind with the two circuits we have faced so far, but I think we have to work harder next time out."

The next round of the championship will take place at the Derbyshire circuit on May 25.

Picture: NICK DUNGAN

PERFECT WEEKEND: Leon Camier produced blistering pace to beat more powerful bikes at Oulton Park and now tops the British Superbike Championship standings

Sport updated daily online
www.kentnews.co.uk

Reeves makes vow to regain world title

FORMER world sidecar champion Tim Reeves is more determined than ever to claim a fourth world title ahead of the opening round of the championship this afternoon.

The Tenterden rider lost his grip on the world championship last year, losing out to Fin, Pekka Paivarinta by just three points.

This year, Reeves is eager to reclaim the world title, but goes into the first round at Germany's Schleiz circuit without regular passenger Patrick Farrance, who has decided to quit the sport. Brother Tristan Reeves has come out of retirement to fill in as passenger for the rest of the season.

Reeves said: "I am not going to lose the title again. We will be going out all guns blazing to try and get the title back.

"I am a bit disappointed Patrick has decided to call it a day, but Tristan has stepped in. It will be his first time on the bike for many years so it could be interesting."

Conway aiming to improve Indy form

MIKE Conway will complete the first half of qualifying for one of motorsports most famous events in the Indy 500 this evening.

The Sevenoaks racer, who moved to the American Indy Racing League this season, has had a disappointing start to his North American racing career with three consecutive retirements.

With one of the world's most famous races barely a month away, Conway is hoping to leave his mark.

Before he could begin qualifying at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Conway had to complete a rigorous Rookie Orientation Programme.

The system used for all rookies at the circuit sees drivers have to complete 10 laps of the circuit at 200mph, 205mph, 210mph and 215mph before they can take part in the event.

Aaron steels himself for full-time A1 seat

A PERMANENT place in the Great Britain A1GP team is the aim for Aaron Steele after a promising debut in the final round of the series at Brands Hatch last weekend.

The Chatham-born driver received a shock call-up and jumped at the chance to make his international debut in the World Cup of Motorsport at the famous Kent circuit.

Steele, who was nominated for the McLaren Autosport Young Driver of the Year Award last year, completed the Friday test session without drama and secured the ninth fastest time in the Ferrari powered single-seater.

Despite having three times the power of a Formula Palmer Audi car he raced last year under his foot, Steele coped well with the task and is eager for another opportunity.

He told Kent on Sunday: "It was a very new thing to suddenly jump into and a lot of new technology to get to grips with. It was a real eye opener and fantastic experience.

"I was quite satisfied with what I did and I felt there was probably a little bit more of a lap time within me. I got more and more confident every lap I completed, but more importantly I brought the car home."

Without a drive confirmed for 2009 due to financial problems, Steele is hoping his performance will prompt an offer.

IMPRESSIVE: Aaron Steele performed well in his A1 debut at Brands Hatch

Warm-up race to help Byrne do Italian job

SHANE Byrne has given his hopes of a podium finish in the fifth round of the World Superbike Championship this afternoon a boost after clinching his first race win since October.

The Sheppey rider has had a disappointing start to the series after dominating the British Superbike Championship last year.

He has just one top six finish to his name going into this weekend's World Superbike meeting at the famous Monza circuit in Italy.

The reigning British Superbike champion has been frustrated by his lack of pace after an impressive performance in pre-season which saw him top the time sheets.

With his team on home soil, Byrne entered himself as a wild card in an Italian Superbike Championship race at Monza last weekend in a bid to gather data.

The 33-year-old quickly familiarised himself with the circuit and went on to dominate the race and clinch his first victory since a double win at Brands Hatch in October.

Byrne believes the extra running at the track will give him an advantage today.

He said: "It was a good idea to take part in the Italian championship, which is a really good level, because it allowed me to get a feeling for the Monza track.

"I was able to do 16 laps at an excellent pace, which makes me confident for the World Championship round."

EXTRA LAPS: Shane Byrne hopes racing Monza last week will give him a boost

STRUGGLE: Liam Daish is fighting to hold on to players and his Fleet future is uncertain

Daish on tight Fleet budget

LIAM Daish admits he has a struggle on his hands to keep the Fleet's best players after the club announced the playing budget would be cut by 50 per cent.

The Blue Square Premier League club revealed last month that £80,000 is needed in the off season – May and June – to ensure they have enough to pay the players, which is a combined budget of £10,000 per week.

This week the club, owned by internet community MyFootballClub, released a draft playing budget of £5,000 which Fleet boss Daish feels is not enough to keep all of the current squad.

"The budget which has been talked about is not ideal and would be very difficult to work with next season," he said. "It would probably be the lowest in the league and I'm not sure how many players I would be able to keep, it might be hard to retain any of them on that budget."

The Fleet boss, who celebrated four years in charge at the Fleet this season, is out of contract this summer and faces an uncertain future.

Daish, who guided the club to FA Trophy glory this time last year, admitted he would like to stay at Stonebridge Road, but only if the club is to move in the right direction.

He said: "We have had talks, but there are still a lot of questions which need to be answered. As far as I am aware no deadlines have been set regarding my future."

Northeast headed in right direction

Young batsman shines in Denly's absence

By GLENN PEARSON

HAVING turned up at the ground ready for a spot of 12th man duty, perhaps it was always written in the script that Sam Northeast would find himself opening the batting and hitting his highest First Class score.

As a sportswriter it's one of those days that you dream about – the young pretender unexpectedly getting a chance and taking it with both hands – the only bit missing from the fairytale is that he narrowly missed out on registering a deserved century after hitting an elegant 87, but perhaps that would have been going too far.

The 19-year-old was told 45 minutes before Kent's County Championship Division Two game with Glamorgan on Wednesday, that he was in the side to replace Joe Denly who was suffering with a migraine. Ten minutes later and he was padded up ready to opening the innings with skipper Rob Key on a lively deck at St Lawrence.

Good nick

Northeast said: "It was daunting but I have been in form and didn't feel I had to do too much more in preparation as I've been in good nick. I knew I had a chance of playing, but then to be told I was opening was another shock.

"I was eager to take any chance and was just hoping to take the opportunity when it came, so to get a score on the board was really nice."

The dream was almost over before it even began for the Ashford-born teenager, as Garnett Kruger dropped him running in from the fine-leg boundary from just his third ball faced. From then on, Northeast went for his shots and he felt the dropped chance helped him knuckle down.

He said: "It was a bit like the nerves went after it really, and I knew I had a chance and I thought 'let's take it now.' You need a little bit of luck or a break and I just had to adapt to the situation."

OPPORTUNITY: Sam Northeast hit 87 as he stood in for Joe Denly (above right), who is expected to return for Sunday and Monday's games Pictures: ADY KERRY

His knock featured an array of shots off his hip and square drives and it was one such drive that proved his downfall. After punching one through the covers for four off Kruger, one pushed a little wider enticed Northeast, nearing a maiden century, into a false shot and he nicked off to the waiting slip corden.

He said: "Getting that first hundred came into my head a little bit and to be honest that was probably what I was thinking of. I felt really good at the crease, but was probably a bit eager on that shot.

"It was a schoolboy dream, that sounds cheesy I know but you always want to go and perform in front of the fans at Canterbury so it was great to get an 80 odd."

With Darren Stevens out for four weeks with a fractured finger, Northeast will hope to beat off competition from Justin Kemp to make the spot his own. Having hit 121 not out and 82 for the 2nd XI against Middlesex last week, he knows what's needed to keep his name in the frame.

"All I can do is keep scoring and keep performing and improving and hopefully the coaches will pick me," he said. "I have to make it hard for them to leave me out.

"I like batting at three or four but I can open and I don't mind it at all, so being thrust in at number one was an enjoyable experience.

"If you look at our side our batting line-up is fantastically strong and everyone is in pretty good form. Everybody is vying for a place, which is healthy for the club which probably makes me want to improve my game and make sure that my runs count."

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Financial climate forces islanders to ditch Kent

PLANS for a football club from Guernsey to join the Kent League have been shelved until economic conditions on the island improve.

The group behind Guernsey Athletics were hoping to enter a team in the division for the 2009-10 season. Instead they have temporarily put that on hold after only raising half the money needed to cover their costs for a season.

James Blower, the club's commercial director, also told Kent on Sunday there was no guarantee they would be able to raise sufficient funds to submit a bid to join in 2010 either.

He said: "The climate has changed beyond recognition since we came up with the plan and even with an economy like Guernsey we're not immune. We were relying on the goodwill and support from a number of businesses who are feeling the pressure.

"I would say at this stage we're not confident [about the 2010/11 season] but hopefully the situation will look a lot better when we start to put our plans together early next year."

Once the money is in place the club will then have to formally apply to the Kent League. They would then need the member clubs, who did not universally welcome the initial plans, to approve the bid before Guernsey could enter the division.

Athletics are looking into entering the FA Vase and a county cup – possibly in Kent – next season in what would be their first competitive games against mainland opposition. The club's board are due to meet tomorrow to discuss the plans.

Blower also revealed the club had received a number of requests for friendly games from mainland clubs, including several from Kent League clubs.

By DAVID PRITCHARD

Pictures: ADY KERRY

OPPORTUNITY: Mark McCammon knows all about the highs and lows of the play-offs

'You've got to take each opportunity'

Gills striker seeking third shot at glory at Wembley

OPPORTUNITIES to play in big cup finals can be rare even for the greatest players, but for Gillingham striker Mark McCammon they are becoming a welcome habit.

The big striker is hoping to help Gills overcome Rochdale in their play-off semi-final second leg at Priestfield tonight.

If the home side win through, it would book their place in the final at Wembley later this month and set up McCammon's third visit in as many years.

The 30-year-old is no stranger to the big occasion, helping Doncaster to beat Leeds in the League One play-off final last season. He was also in the same squad that reached the Johnstone's Paint Trophy final at the national stadium a year earlier.

Earlier in his career he came off the bench, along with Curtis Weston, for Millwall in the FA Cup final against Manchester United five years ago, while he figured in the Brentford sides that lost play-off and LDV Vans finals in successive seasons at Cardiff's Millennium Stadium.

After tasting both sides of the play-off experience, McCammon knows better than most what is at stake tonight.

Winner

He said: "You've got to take each opportunity when it comes in football. You just want success each season. Being a winner, playing to the best of your ability and being in a good team that delivers the goods week-in week-out – that's what football is all about.

"Winning honours and getting silverware give you something to look back on when you finish you career."

A Wembley appearance would be the perfect end to a hugely disappointing season for the Barbados international.

Gills boss Mark Stimson made him his top priority in the transfer market last summer, hailing him as the perfect foil for Simeon Jackson. But the honeymoon period lasted a matter of minutes as McCammon injured a hamstring in his first training session.

After missing the whole of pre-season he struggled to make an impact. Worse was to follow as he aggravated his hamstring injury in an FA Cup tie at Stockport in November, spending another two months on the sidelines.

Since returning in February, McCammon has slowly established himself as an integral part of the side, scoring vital goals against play-off rivals Dagenham and Chesterfield last month.

He is keen to stress supporters have still not seen the best of him, but is hoping to make amends in the most important game of the season.

"It's been a very frustrating year, I've been up and down all the time with my injuries," he said. "I play my best when I'm fit and hopefully I can progress from now, play to the best of my ability and hopefully we can get through the play-offs."

Scally's praise for 'magnificent' fans

A MEMORABLE atmosphere is expected at Priestfield tonight for arguably Gillingham's biggest game since relegation from the second tier in 2005.

The club have an impeccable record in play-off semi-finals, reaching the final on each of their three previous appearances in the post-season.

Mark Stimson's side are slight favourites following Thursday's 0-0 draw at Rochdale in the first leg, with the club's fans intending to turn Priestfield into a cauldron of noise.

Alan Liptrott, co-editor of fans' website gillsconnect.com, is a veteran of the previous semi-final wins against Sunderland, Stoke and Preston.

He said: "Those games stick in your mind because they are so tight and emotional. It will be a special occasion."

About 700 Gills fans made the 500-mile round trip to Rochdale on Thursday.

Club chairman Paul Scally paid tribute to their efforts. "Our fans were magnificent," he said. "They sung their hearts out and were an inspiration to the team.

"They always travel away in numbers and they'll all be out for the second leg and I'm sure they'll create the right atmosphere."

AWAY DAY: Around 700 Gillingham fans cheered on Curtis Weston and his team-mates at Rochdale

Hottest ticket in town selling fast

PRIESTFIELD could see its biggest attendance in years this evening as Gillingham fans turn out in force in the hope of cheering the club to Wembley.

With the tie finely balanced at 0-0 following Thursday's first leg with Rochdale, there is all to play for.

Despite the game being screened live on television and a relatively small number of away fans expected to make the journey, the attendance could exceed the 10,107 that watched the FA Cup tie with Aston Villa in January.

The stadium has not got near its 11,400 capacity since Gillingham's days in the second tier five seasons ago.

The Medway Stand, Rainham End and Gordon Road Stand were all sold out by Thursday.

When Kent on Sunday went to press the club had several hundred tickets remaining, but were confident they would all be snapped up before the game.

The club's ticket office will be open from midday until the 6.30pm kick-off to sell any of the remaining allocation. For the latest information call the ticket office direct on 01634 300000, option three.

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'WE CAN BE HEROES!'

King's rallying cry to Gills as club bids for promotion

By **DAVID PRITCHARD**

SIMON King has urged his Gillingham team-mates to go and become club legends by securing promotion back to League One at the first attempt.

Gills play their most eagerly awaited game in years tonight when Rochdale visit Priestfield for the second leg of their play-off semi-final. The winners will set up a date at Wembley later this month to play for promotion to the third tier.

The club has won just five promotions in its 116-year history and are closer to their sixth now than in any season since their last triumph nine years ago.

Nicky Southall is the only player remaining from the memorable victory in the play-off final against Wigan in 2000.

The game has gone down in the club's folklore and King believes a similarly successful campaign would make the current crop heroes.

History books

He said: "It's such a short career, so you want to achieve as much as possible in the game and getting promotion would do that.

"You hear what it was like from Nicky Southall who was here the last time – he's a Gills legend and winning the play-offs would add our names to the history books."

King is one of eight players in the squad to have previous experience of the intense atmosphere created by the play-offs.

He was part of a Barnet team that lost to Shrewsbury on penalties in the Conference semi-final five years ago.

On that occasion he was on the visiting side for the second leg, whereas tonight Gills will be backed by a packed Priestfield.

The attendance is expected to be close to the 10,000 that watched the FA Cup tie with Aston Villa in January and King is hoping for a similarly inspiring atmosphere when the teams step out tonight.

"I look at the Villa game and think, the crowd kept us going really", he said. "We put in a good display and applied ourselves correctly that day.

"We gave Villa a run for their money and I think that was due to the fans keeping us going, so if they can do that again that would be a massive help in our corner."

Like the club's fans, chairman Paul Scally is well aware of the agony and ecstasy produced by the play-offs. He was there for the dramatic defeat to Manchester City in the Division Two play-off final a decade ago, but promotion was achieved 12 months later.

"One was a nightmare when we got beat by Man City and the other was the opposite, unbelievable," he said. "Since that win in 2000, apart from the first couple of years in the Championship, we've had a difficult time."

The Priestfield chief will not allow himself to consider a third trip to Wembley unless it is confirmed tonight, but admitted the current crop remind him of the class of 2000.

"This is a fresh, young team with a lot of energy and they are a really lovely bunch of lads.

"They compare with the team of 2000, with the likes of Andy Hessenthaler and Guy Butters, although they are a fair bit younger."

• ***For minute-by-minute coverage of the match log on to www.kentnews.co.uk.***

Pictures: ADY KERRY

HISTORY BECKONS: Simon King (right), pictured during Gills' play-off first leg draw at Rochdale on Thursday, says promotion is the team's chance to go down in club folklore

THUMBS UP: Mark Stimson is desperate for promoion

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Kent wait on Champions League decision

KENT will be eagerly awaiting the outcome of a meeting in Johannesburg later this month that could allow the club to qualify for the Champions League this season, ***writes Glenn Pearson.***

The county failed to qualify for the inaugural event last summer, despite having reached the Twenty20 final at the Rose Bowl, because they had included players that had associations with the 'rebel' Indian Cricket League.

Kent's inclusion in their squad of Justin Kemp and Azhar Mahmood, who both featured in the Indian Twenty20 competition, meant the club missed out on taking part in the event that includes teams from England, India, South Africa and Australia.

Now, it is hoped a meeting of the International Cricket Council on May 21 will see an amnesty between the two rival Twenty20 competitions – the Indian Premier League and the Indian Cricket League – which means clubs and counties would be free to qualify for the Champions League and similar events.

The Champions League would have taken place last year but a packed international schedule, combined with the terrorist attack in India, saw the event shelved for a year.

Kent chairman, George Kennedy, has asked whether the county – who would have qualified for the tournament having reached the final of England's domestic Twenty20 competition – could be given a reprieve and allowed to enter the Champions League in October together with winners Middlesex, but doesn't hold out much hope.

He said: "If there were an amnesty with the ICL and the IPL it would mean we would be able to qualify for the Champions League if we were to get to a final again.

"The first thing I did when I knew about this meeting was to ask if we might be given a reprieve, I was flying a kite really just to see and I'm sure it's highly unlikely."